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*When I consider thy Heavens, the Work of thy Fingers; the Moon and the Stars which thou hast ordained. Lord what is Man that thou art mindful of him, and the Son of Man that thou visitest him. Psalm VIII. v. 3 & 4.*

Printed for John Rivington and Partners.

# MEDITATIONS AND CONTEMPLATIONS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

CONTAINING,

| VOL. I. | VOL. II. |
| --- | --- |
| MEDITATIONS AMONG THE TOMBS; | CONTEMPLATIONS ON THE NIGHT; |
| REFLECTIONS ON A FLOWER-GARDEN; | CONTEMPLATIONS ON THE STARRY HEAVENS; AND, |
| AND, A DESCANT ON CREATION. | A WINTER-PIECE. |

BY JAMES HERVEY, A.M.
Late Rector of *Weston-Favell*, in *Northamptonshire*.

A NEW EDITION.
Printed from a COPY corrected by the AUTHOR.

VOL. II.

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## The FRONTISPIECE

Exhibits a View of the nocturnal Heavens.—On the Top of an OBSERVATORY, two Perſons examine the celeſtial Bodies with their Teleſcopes: Inſtruments, which gave Riſe to the moſt important Improvements in the Science of *Aſtronomy*.

An aged Philoſopher is repreſented, inſtructing his Pupils. He deſcribes, with his Compaſſes, the Order and Courſes of the Planets; according to the *Newtonian* Hypotheſis, intimated by a Book bearing that great Author's Name.—The whole Tenour of the Lecture, in Concert with the whole Structure and Œconomy of the Skies, ENARRANT GLORIAM DEI, profeſſedly *declare the Glory of GOD*.—Behind the Philoſopher ſtands one of his Scholars, with an Air of cloſe Attention, computing on his Fingers the Diſtances, the Magnitudes, the Velocities of the planetary Orbs.—Another at his Right hand, attending to the Deſcription of the ſtupendous Syſtem, is ſtruck with Surprize, and impreſſed with

Awe.—A third, with conſcious Humiliation in his Countenance, holds a Scroll, inſcribed with a Diagram; expreſſing the joint Action of the *centrifugal* and *centripetal* Forces. As by the one, the Planets are continually endeavouring to fly off; but by the other, are perpetually drawn towards the Centre of their Motion; SIC GRATIA DEI, *Such is the Operation of Divine Grace:* correcting the irregular Impulſe of our natural Depravity; determining our Deſires to the Centre of Happineſs; and directing our Goings in the Circle of Duty.—A Youth on the Left, overwhelmed with Veneration for the Almighty Maker, in a tranſport of Gratitude, and a Poſture of Adoration, pours out his Soul in thoſe emphatical Words; *When I conſider thy Heavens, the Work of thy Fingers, the Moon and the Stars which thou haſt ordained:*—LORD, *what is Man, that thou art mindful of him; and the Son of Man, that thou viſiteſt him?* Pſal. viii. 3, 4.

TO

TO

# PAUL ORCHARD,

OF

STOKE-ABBEY, in DEVONSHIRE, Eſq;

DEAR SIR,

AS your honoured Father was pleaſed to make choice of me, to anſwer in your Name at the Font, and to exerciſe a ſort of *Guardian-ſhip* over your ſpiritual Intereſts; permit me, by putting theſe little Treatiſes into your Hand, to fulfil ſome Part of that ſolemn Obligation.

*GRATITUDE* for many ſignal Favours, and a conſcientious Regard to my ſacred Engagement, have long ago inſpired my Breaſt with the warmeſt Wiſhes, both for your true *Dignity*, and real *Happineſs*. Nor can I think of a more endearing, or a more effectual Way, of advancing either the one or the other, than to ſet before you a Sketch of your excellent *Father's* Character.—Illuſtrious Examples are the moſt winning Incitements to Virtue. And none can come attended with ſuch particular Recommendations to YOU, Sir, as the Pattern of that worthy Perſon, from whom you derive your very Being.

A MOST cordial, and reverential Eſteem for the *Divine Word*, was one of his remarkable Qualities. Thoſe Oracles of Heaven were his principal Delight, and his inſeparable Companions. Your Gardens, your ſolitary Walks, and the Hedges of your

your Fields can witneſs*, with what an unwearied Aſſiduity He exerciſed Himſelf in the Law of the LORD. From hence He fetched his Maxims of Wiſdom, and formed his Judgment of Things. The ſacred *Precepts*, were the Model of his Temper, and the Guide of his Life; while the precious *Promiſes*, were the Joy of his Heart, and his Portion for ever.

*IMPROVING Company* was another of his moſt reliſhing Pleaſures. Few Gentlemen were better furniſhed, either with Richneſs of Fancy, or Copiouſneſs of Expreſſion, to bear a ſhining Part in Converſation. With theſe Talents, He always endeavoured to give ſome *uſeful*, generally ſome *religious*, Turn to the Diſcourſe. Nor did he ever reflect, with greater Complacency, on his ſocial Hours, than when they tended to glorify the Eternal Majeſty; and to awaken, in Himſelf and others, a more lively Spirit of Devotion.

* Joſh. xxiv. 27.

To project for the Good of Others, was his frequent *Study*, and to carry thoſe benevolent Contrivances into Execution, his favourite *Employ*. When viſited by the young Perſons of the Neighbourhood, far from taking an ungraceful Pride to initiate them in a Debauchery, or confirm them in a riotous Habit; it was his inceſſant Aim, by finely-adapted Perſuaſives, to encourage them in *Induſtry*, and eſtabliſh them in a Courſe of *Sobriety*; to *guard* them againſt the Allurements of Vice, and *animate* them with the Principles of Piety. A noble Kind of Hoſpitality this! Which will probably tranſmit its beneficial Influence, to their earthly Poſſeſſions; to their future Families; and even to their everlaſting State.

A CONVICTION of human Indigence, and a thorough Perſuaſion of the Divine All-ſufficiency, induced him to be *frequent in Prayer*. To proſtrate himſelf in profound Adoration, before that infinitely exalted

alted Being, who dwells in Light inacceſſible, was *his Glory*; to implore the Continuance of the Almighty Favour, and the Increaſe of all Chriſtian Graces, was *his Gain*. In thoſe Moments, no doubt, he remembered YOU, Sir, with a particular Earneſtneſs; and lodged many an ardent Petition in the Court of Heaven, for his Infant Son. Ceaſe not to ſecond them with your own devout Supplications, that they may deſcend upon your Head, "in the "Fulneſs of the Bleſſings of the Goſpel of "Peace."

To give their genuine Luſtre to all his other Endowments, he was careful to maintain an *humble Mind*. Though his Friends might admire his ſuperior Abilities, or his Acquaintance applaud his exemplary Behaviour, he ſaw how far he *fell ſhort* of the Mark of his high Calling: ſaw, and lamented his Defects: ſaw, and renounced Himſelf: relying, for final Acceptance, and endleſs

endleſs Felicity, on a *better Righteouſneſs* than his own; even on the tranſcendently perfect Righteouſneſs, and inconceivably precious Death, of JESUS the Redeemer. This was the Rock of his Hope, and the very Crown of his Rejoicing.

THESE, Sir, are ſome of the *diſtinguiſhing* Characteriſtics of your deceaſed Parent. As you had the Misfortune to loſe ſo valuable a Relative, before you was capable of forming any Acquaintance with his Perſon; I flatter myſelf, you will the more attentively obſerve his Picture. This His *moral Picture*; deſigned, not to be ſet in Gold, or ſparkle in Enamel, but to breathe in your Spirit, and to live in all your Conduct.——Which, though it be intirely your own, calculated purely for yourſelf, may poſſibly (like the Family Pieces in your Parlour, that glance an Eye upon as many as enter the Room) make ſome *pleaſing* and *uſeful* Impreſſion

on

on every Beholder.—May every one, charmed with the beautiful Image, catch its Reſemblance; and Each, in his reſpective Sphere, "go and do likewiſe."

BUT You, Sir, are peculiarly concerned to copy the amiable Original. As the Order of an indulgent Providence, has made you Heir of the *affluent Circumſtances*; let not a gay and thoughtleſs Inadvertence, cut you off from the *richer Inheritance*, of theſe noble Qualifications.—Theſe will be your Security, amidſt all the glittering Dangers; which are inſeparable from blooming Years, and an elevated Situation in Life. Theſe are your Path, your ſure and only Path, to true Greatneſs, and ſolid Happineſs.——Tread in theſe Steps, and you cannot fail to be the Darling of your Friends, and the Favourite of Heaven. Tread in theſe Steps, and you will give inexpreſſible Joy to one of the beſt of Mothers; you will become an extenſive Bleſſing

Bleſſing to your Fellow-Creatures; and which, after ſuch moſt engaging Motives, is ſcarce worthy to be mentioned, you will be the Delight, the Honour, and the Boaſt of,

*Dear* SIR,

*Your very affectionate Godfather,*

*And moſt faithful humble Servant,*

Weſton-Favell, *near* Northampton, July 14, 1747.

JAMES HERVEY.

# PREFACE.

WE *have already exerciſed our Speculations, on the Tombs and Flowers; ſurveying Nature, covered with the deepeſt Horrors, and arrayed in the richeſt Beauties.* Allegory *taught many of the Objects, to ſpeak the Language of Virtue; while* Imagination *lent her Colouring, to give the Leſſons an engaging Air.—And this with a View of imitating that* Divine *Inſtructor; who commiſſioned the* Lily *, *in her ſilver Suit, to remonſtrate in the Ear of unbelieving Reaſon: Who ſent his Diſciples (Men ordained to* teach *the Univerſe) to* learn *Maxims of the laſt Importance, from the moſt* inſignificant *Birds *, that wander through the Paths of the Air; from the very* meaneſt *Herbs *, that are ſcattered over the Face of the* † *Ground.*

*Embold-*

* Matt. vi. 26, 28, 29, 30.

† Celebrated Writers, as *Demoſthenes* and *Cicero*, *Thucydides* and *Livy*, are obſerved to have a Stile peculiar to themſelves.—Now, whoever conſiders the Diſcourſes of *Chriſt*,

*Emboldened by the kind Acceptance of the preceding Sketches, I beg leave to confide in the ſame* Bene-

*Chriſt*, will find Him diſtinguiſhing Himſelf by a Stile, which may properly be called *HIS OWN*. Majeſtic, yet familiar; happily uniting Dignity with Condeſcenſion; it conſiſts, in teaching his Followers the *ſublimeſt* Truths, by ſpiritualizing on the moſt *common* Occurrences. Which, beſides its being level to the loweſt Apprehenſions: and admirably adapted to ſteal into the moſt inattentive Heart; is accompanied with this very ſingular Advantage, That it turns even the *Sphere of Buſineſs* into a *School of Inſtruction*; and renders the moſt ordinary Objects a Set of Monitors, ever ſoliciting our Regard, becauſe ever preſent to our Senſes.—So that, I believe, it may be ſaid of this *amiable Method*, in which our LORD conveyed; as well as of that *powerful Energy*, which attended his Doctrines, That *never Man ſpake like this Man*. —The *Harveſt* approaching, He reminds his Diſciples of a far more important Harveſt, *John* iv. 35. *Matt.* xiii. 39. when immortal Beings ſhall be *reaped* from the Grave, and *gathered in* from all the Quarters of the Earth: when every human Creature ſhall ſuſtain the Character of valuable *Wheat*, or deſpicable *Tares*; and accordingly be lodged in Manſions of everlaſting Security, or conſigned over to the Rage of unquenchable Fire.—In his Charge to *Fiſhermen*, when they are commencing Preachers, *Matt.* iv. 19. He exhorts them, conformably to the Nature of their late Occupation, to uſe the ſame *Aſſiduity* and *Addreſs* in winning Souls, as they were wont to exerciſe in catching the finny Prey.—For the farther Illuſtration of this no leſs uſeful, than curious Subject, I would refer my Reader to a valuable Note, in Sir *Iſaac Newton*'s Obſervations on the Prophecies; p. 148. 4to Edition.

Benevolence *of* Taſte, *for the Protection and Support of the two remaining Eſſays; which exhibit a Proſpect of* ſtill Life, *and* grand Operation: *which moralize on the moſt compoſed, and moſt magnificent, Appearances of Things.—In which,* Fancy *is again ſuffered to introduce her Imagery; but only as the Handmaid of* Truth: *in order to dreſs her Perſon, and diſplay her Charms; to engage the Attention, and win the Love, even of the* Gay, *and of the* Faſhionable. *Which is more likely to be effected, by forming agreeable Pictures of Nature, and deriving inſtructive Obſervations; than by the laborious Method of long-deduced Arguments, or cloſe-connected Reaſonings.—The Contemplation of the Heavens and the Earth, of their admirable Properties and beneficial Changes, has always afforded the moſt exalted Gratification to the human Mind. In Compliance with this prevailing Taſte, I have drawn my ſerious Admonitions from the ſtupendous Theatre, and variegated Scenery, of the Univerſe. That the Reader may learn his Duty, from his very Pleaſures—may gather* Wiſdom, *mingled with* Virtue, *from the moſt refined* Entertainments, *and nobleſt* Delights.

*The* Evening, *drawing her Sables over the World, and gently darkening into* Night, *is a Seaſon peculiarly proper for ſedate Conſideration.*

*All*

*All Circumſtances concur, to huſh our Paſſions, and ſooth our Cares; to tempt our Steps abroad, and prompt our Thoughts to ſerious Reflection.*

——— Then is the Time,
For thoſe, whom Wiſdom, and whom Nature charm,
To ſteal themſelves from the degen'rate Croud,
And ſoar above this little Scene of Things;
To tread low-thoughted Vice beneath their Feet;
To ſooth the throbbing Paſſions into Peace;
And woo lone Quiet in her ſilent Walks *.

*The Favour I would ſolicit for the* firſt *of the following Compoſitions, is, That it may be permitted to attend, in ſuch retired and contemplative Excurſions. To attend, if not under the Character of a Friend; at leaſt, in the humble Capacity of a Servant, or a Page:—as a* Servant, *to open the Door of Meditation, and remove every Impediment to thoſe beſt Exerciſes of the Mind; which blend Advantage with Amuſement, and improve, while they delight:—as a* Page, *to gather up the unſtable, fluctuating Train of Fancy; and collect her fickle Powers into a conſiſtent, regular, and uſeful Habit of Thinking.*

*The* other, *converſant among the* ſtarry Regions, *would lead the Imagination through thoſe beautiful*

* THOMS. Autumn, l. 973. laſt Edit.

*beautiful Tracts of unclouded Azure; and point out to the Judgment ſome of thoſe aſtoniſhing Particulars, which ſo eminently ſignalize the celeſtial Worlds. A Proſpect this, to which Curioſity attracts our Eyes, and to which Scripture itſelf often directs our Study. A Proſpect beyond all others moſt excellently calculated, to* inlarge *the Soul, and* enoble *its Conceptions;—to give the grandeſt Apprehenſions of the* Everlaſting *GOD, and create Sentiments of becoming Superiority, with relation to all* tranſitory *Intereſt;—in a Word, to furniſh* Faith *with the ſureſt Foundation, for a ſteady Affiance, and true Magnanimity of Spirit; to afford* Piety *the ſtrongeſt Motives, both for a lively Gratitude, and profound Veneration.*

*While* Galilæo *lifts his Tube, and diſcovers the prodigious Magnitude of thoſe radiant Orbs;—while* Newton *meaſures their amazing Diſtances, and unites the whole Syſtem, in harmonious Order, by the ſubtle Influences of Attraction:—I would only, like the Herald before that illuſtrious* Hebrew *, *proclaim at every Turn,* "Bow the "Knee, *and adore the Almighty Maker; magnify* "*his eternal Name,* and make his Praiſe, *like* "*all his Works,* to be glorious."

* Gen. xli. 43.

# CONTEMPLATIONS

ON THE

# NIGHT.

---

Night *is fair* Virtue's *immemorial Friend:*
*The conſcious* Moon, *through ev'ry diſtant Age,*
*Has held a Lamp to* Wiſdom.

Night-Thoughts, N° V.

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CON-

# CONTEMPLATIONS

ON THE

# NIGHT.

THE Buſineſs of the Day diſpatched, and the ſultry heats abated, invited me to the Recreation of a Walk. A Walk, in one of the *fineſt Receſſes* of the Country; and in one of the moſt *pleaſant Evenings*, which the Summer-Seaſon produced.

THE Limes and Elms, uniting their Branches over my Head, formed a *verdant Canopy*, and caſt a moſt refreſhing Shade. Under my Feet lay a *Carpet* of Nature's *Velvet*; Graſs intermingled with Moſs, and embroidered with Flowers. Jeſſamines, in Conjunction with Woodbines, twined around the Trees; diſplaying their *artleſs Beauties* to the Eye, and diffuſing

fuſing their *delicious Sweets* through the Air. On either Side, the Boughs, rounded into a Set of regular Arches, opened a View into the *diſtant Fields*, and preſented me with a Proſpect of the *bending Skies*. The little Birds, all joyous and grateful for the Favours of the Light, were paying their Acknowledgments in a *Tribute* of *Harmony*, and ſoothing themſelves to Reſt with Songs. While a French-Horn, from a neighbouring Seat, ſent its melodious Accents, ſoftened by the Length of their Paſſage, to complete the *Concert* of the *Grove*.

ROVING in this agreeable Manner, my Thoughts were exerciſed on a Subject, ſtill more agreeable than the Seaſon, or the Scene. I mean, our late *ſignal Victory*, over the united Forces of inteſtine Treaſon, and foreign Invaſion. A Victory, which pours Joy through the preſent Age, and will tranſmit its Influence to Generations yet unborn.—Are not all the Bleſſings, which can endear Society, or render Life itſelf deſirable, centered in our preſent happy Conſtitution, and auſpicious Government? Were they not *all* ſtruck at, by that impious and horrid Blow, meditated at *Rome*; levelled by *France*; and ſeconded by factious Spirits at *Home?* Who then can be ſufficiently thankful, for the gracious Interpoſition of Providence; which has not only averted the

the impending Ruin, but turned it with aggravated Confuſion, on the Authors of our Troubles?

METHINKS, every Thing *valuable*, which I poſſeſs; every Thing *charming*, which I behold; conſpire to enhance this ever-memorable Event. To this it is owing, that I can ramble unmoleſted along the Vale of private Life, and taſte all the innocent Satisfactions of a *contemplative* Retirement.—Had Rebellion * ſucceeded in her deteſtable Deſigns; inſtead of walking with Security and Complacence in theſe flowery Paths, I might have met the *Aſſaſſin* with his *Dagger*: or have been obliged to abandon my Habitation, and "embrace the Rock for a Shelter."—Farewel then, ye fragrant Shades; Seats of Meditation, and calm Repoſe! I ſhould have been driven from your loved Retreats, to make Way for ſome barbarous, ſome *inſulting Victor*.—Farewel then, ye pleaſing Toils, and wholeſome Amuſements of my rural Hours! I ſhould no more have reared the tender Flower to the Sun; no more have taught the Eſpalier to expand her Boughs; nor have fetched, any longer, from



* Referring to the Rebellion, ſet on Foot in the Year 1745.—Which, for ſeveral Months, made a very alarming Progreſs in the North—but was happily extinguiſhed by the glorious and deciſive Victory at *Culloden*.

my Kitchen-Garden, the pureſt Supplies of Health.

HAD Rebellion ſucceeded in her deteſtable Deſigns; inſtead of being regaled with the *Muſic* of the *Woods*, I might have been alarmed with the Sound of the Trumpet, and all the Thunder of War. Inſtead of being entertained with this *beautiful Landſcape*, I might have beheld our Houſes ranſacked, and our Villages plundered; I might have beheld our fenced Cities encompaſſed with Armies, and our fruitful Fields "cloathed with Deſolation;" or have been ſhocked with the more frightful Images, of "Garments rolled in Blood," and of a Ruffian's Blade reeking from a Brother's Heart. Inſtead of Peace, with her chearing Olives, ſheltering our Abodes; inſtead of Juſtice, with her impartial Scale, ſecuring our Goods; *Perſecution* had brandiſhed her Sword, and *Slavery* clanked her Chains.

NOR are theſe Miſeries imaginary only, or the Creatures of a groundleſs Panic. There are, in a neighbouring Kingdom, who very lately experienced them in all their Rigour *. And, if the

* See a Pamphlet intitled, *Popery always the ſame.*—Which contains a Narrative of the *Perſecutions*, and ſevere Hardſhips lately ſuffered by the *Proteſtants*, in the Southern Parts of *France*; and cloſes with a moſt ſeaſonable, alarming, and ſpirited Addreſs to the Inhabitants of *Great-Britain*. Printed 1746. Price 8*d*.

the *malignant* Spirit of *Popery*, had forced itſelf into our Church; if an *abjured Pretender*, had cut his Way to our Throne; We could have no Reaſon to expect a Mitigation of their Severity, on our Behalf.—But, ſuppoſing the tender Mercies of a bigotted Uſurper, to have been ſomewhat leſs cruel. Where, alaſs! would have been the Encouragement to cultivate our little Portion; or what Pleaſure could ariſe, from an improved Spot; if both the one and the other lay, every Moment, at the Mercy of *lawleſs* Power? This imbittering Circumſtance would ſpoil their Reliſh; and by rendering them a *precarious*, would render them a *joyleſs* Acquiſition. —In vain, might the Vine ſpread her purple Cluſters; in vain, be laviſh of her generous Juices; if *Tyranny*, like a ravenous Harpy, ſhould be always hovering over the Bowl, and ready to ſnatch it from the Lip of Induſtry, or to wreſt it from the Hand of Liberty.

*LIBERTY*, that deareſt of Names; and *Property*, that beſt of Charters; give an additional, an inexpreſſible Charm, to every delightful Object.—See, how the declining Sun has beautified the *weſtern Clouds*; has arrayed them in Crimſon, and ſkirted them with Gold. Such a Refinement of our domeſtic Bliſs, is Property; ſuch an Improvement of our public Privileges, is

Liberty.—When the Lamp of Day ſhall withdraw his Beams, there will ſtill remain the ſame Collection of floating Vapours; but O! how changed, how gloomy! The Carnation-Streaks are faded; the golden Edgings are wore away; and all the lovely Tinges are loſt, in a *leaden-coloured louring* Sadneſs. *Such* would be the Aſpect, of all theſe Scenes of Beauty, and all theſe Abodes of Pleaſure; if expoſed continually to the Caprice of arbitrary Sway, or held in a State of abject and cringing Dependence.

THE Sun has almoſt finiſhed his daily Race, and haſtens to the Goal. He deſcends lower and lower; till his Chariot-Wheels ſeem to hover on the utmoſt Verge of the Sky. What is ſomewhat remarkable, the Orb of Light, upon the Point of ſetting, grows conſiderably *broader*. The Shadows of Objects, juſt before they become blended in undiſtinguiſhable Darkneſs, are exceedingly *lengthened* *.—Like Bleſſings, little prized, while *poſſeſſed:* but highly eſteemed, the very Inſtant they are preparing for their Flight: bitterly regretted, when once they are gone, and to be ſeen no more.

THE radiant Globe is, now, half-immerſed beneath the duſky Earth. Or, as the ancient Poet

* *Majoreſque cadunt altis de Montibus Umbræ.*

VIRG

imbs, are grown weary of their Frolicks;
tired Shepherd, has impoſed Silence on
:. In the Branches, all was Sprightli-
l Song: but now the lively Green, is
ı the deſcending Glooms; and no tune-
are heard, only the plaintive Stock-
ɔoing mournfully through the Grove.—
I now be vain and trifling, the Heavens
: Earth would rebuke my unſeaſonable
Therefore, be theſe Moments devoted
ıghts, *ſedate*, as the cloſing Day; *ſolemn*,
ace of Things. And, indeed, however
al Hours are enlivened with innocent
:ry; let every Evening, in her ſable Ha-
l the Bell to ſerious Conſideration. No-
an be more proper, for a Perſon who
n the Borders of Eternity, and is haſting
ally to his final Audit; nothing more
than daily to ſlip away from the Circle
ıſements, and frequently to relinquiſh
ry of Buſineſs, in order to conſider and
" the Things that belong to his Peace."

:E the Sun is departed, from whence
ɔroceed, that I am not involved in pitchy
ſs? Whence theſe Remainders of *dimi-*
*rightneſs?* Which, though ſcarcely form-
efulgence, ſoften and ſooth the Horrors
of

of Night. I ſee not the ſhining Ruler, yet am cheared with a real, though faint Communication of his Splendor.—Does he remember Us, in his Progreſs through other Climes? Does He ſend a *Detachment* of his Rays, to *eſcort* Us during his perſonal Abſence; or to *cover* (if I may uſe the military Term) our *Retreat* from the Scene of Action? Has he bequeathed Us a Dividend of his Beams, ſufficient to render our Circumſtances eaſy, and our Situation agreeable? Till Sleep pours its ſoft Oppreſſion on the Organs of Senſe; till Sleep ſuſpends all the Operations of our Hands; and intirely ſuperſedes any farther Occaſion for the Light.

No: it is ill-judged and unreaſonable, to aſcribe this beneficent Conduct to the Sun. Not unto Him; not unto Him; but unto his *Almighty Maker* We are obliged, for this pleaſing Attendant, this valuable Legacy. The gracious Author of our Being, has ſo diſpoſed the Collection of circumambient Air, as to make it productive of this fine and wonderful Effect. The Sun-beams, falling on the higher Parts of the aëreal Fluid, inſtead of paſſing on in ſtrait Lines, are bent inwards and conducted to our Sight. Their natural Courſe is over-ruled, and they are bidden to wheel about; on purpoſe to favour Us with a welcome and ſalutary Viſit.—

By

By which means, the Bleſſing of Light, and the Seaſon of Buſineſs, are conſiderably prolonged. And, what is a very endearing Circumſtance, prolonged moſt conſiderably; when the vehement Heats of Summer, incline the *Student* to poſtpone his Walk, till the temperate Evening prevails; when the important Labours of the Harveſt, call the *Huſbandman* abroad, before the Day is fully riſen.

After all the Ardors of the ſultry Day, how reviving is this *Coolneſs!*—This gives new Verdure to the fading Plants; new Vivacity to the withering Flowers; and a more exquiſite Fragrance to their mingled Scents.—By this, the *Air* alſo receives a new Force, and is qualified to exert itſelf with greater Activity. Qualified to brace our Limbs; to heave our Lungs; and co-operate, with a briſker Impulſe, in perpetuating the Circulation of our Blood.—This I might call the grand *Alembic* of Nature; which diſtils her moſt ſovereign *Cordial*, the refreſhing *Dews*. Inceſſant Heat, would rob Us of their beneficial Agency; and oblige them to evaporate, in imperceptible Exhalations. Turbulent Winds, or even the gentler Motions of *Aurora*'s Fan, would diſſipate the riſing Vapours, and not ſuffer them to form a Coalition. But, favoured

favoured by the Stilneſs, and condenſed by the Coolneſs of the Night; they unite in pearly Drops, and create that *finely tempered* Humidity, which chears the vegetable World, as Sleep exhilarates the animal.

NOT unlike to theſe, are the Advantages of *Solitude*. The World is a troubled Ocean; and who can erect ſtable Purpoſes, on its fluctuating Waves? The World is a School of Wrong; and who does not feel Himſelf warping, to its pernicious Influences *? On this Sea of Glaſs †, how inſenſibly we ſlide from our own Stedfaſtneſs! Some ſacred *Truth*, which was ſtruck in lively Characters on our Souls, is obſcured, if not obliterated. Some worthy *Reſolution*, which Heaven had wrought in our Breaſts, is ſhaken, if not overthrown. Some inticing *Vanity*, which we had ſolemnly renounced, again practiſes its Wiles, and again captivates our Affections. How often has an unwary Glance, kindled a Fever of irregular Deſire in our Hearts? How often has a Word of Applauſe, dropt luſcious Poiſon into our Ears; or ſome diſreſpectful Expreſſion, raiſed a Guſt of Paſſion in our Boſoms?

* *Nunquam a turba mores, quos extuli, refero. Aliquid, ex eo quod compoſui, turbatur: aliquid, ex his quæ fugavi, redit. Inimica eſt multorum converſatio.* SENEC.

† Rev. xv. 2.

ſoms? Our Innocence is of ſo *tender* a Conſtitution, that it ſuffers in the promiſcuous Croud. Our Purity is of ſo *delicate* a Complexion, that it ſcarce touches on the World, without contracting a Stain. We ſee, we hear, with Peril.

But here *Safety* dwells. Every meddling and intruſive Avocation is ſecluded. Silence holds the Door againſt the Strife of Tongues, and all the Impertinencies of idle Converſation. The buſy Swarm of vain Images, and cajoling Temptations; which beſet Us, with a buzzing Importunity, amidſt the Gaieties of Life; are chaſed by theſe thickening Shades.—Here I may, without Diſturbance, commune with my own Heart; and learn that beſt of Sciences, to *know myſelf*. Here, the Soul may rally her diſſipated Powers, and Grace recover its native Energy.—This is the Opportunity, to rectify every evil Impreſſion; to expel the Poiſon, and guard againſt the Contagion, of corrupting Examples. This is the Place, where I may, with Advantage, apply myſelf to ſubdue the *Rebel within*; and be Maſter, not of a Sceptre, but of myſelf.—Throng then, ye Ambitious, the Levees of the Powerful; I will be punctual in my Aſſignations with Solitude. To a Mind intent upon its own Improvement, Solitude has Charms incomparably more engaging, than the

*Entertain-*

*Entertainments* preſented in the Theatre; or the *Honours* conferred in the Drawing-Room.

I SAID, Solitude.—Am I then *alone?*—'Tis true, my Acquaintance are at a Diſtance. I have ſtole away from Company, and am remote from all *human* Obſervation.—But that is an alarming Thought,

> *Millions of* ſpiritual *Creatures walk the Earth,*
> Unſeen, *both when we wake, and when we ſleep* *.

PERHAPS, there may be Numbers of thoſe *inviſible Beings*, patroling this ſame Reatreat; and joining with me, in contemplating the Creator's Works. Perhaps, thoſe *miniſtring Spirits*, who rejoice at the Converſion of a Sinner, and hold up the Goings of the Righteous, may follow us to the lonely Receſs; and, even in our moſt ſolitary Moments, be our conſtant *Attendants*.—What a pleaſing Awe is awakened, by ſuch a Reflection! How venerable it renders my retired Walks! I am ſtruck with Reverence, as under the Roof of ſome *ſacred Edifice*; or in the *Preſence-Chamber* of ſome mighty Monarch. —O! may I never bring any Pride of Imagination,

* MILT. *Par. Loſt*, B. IV. l. 677.

nation, nor indulge the leaſt diſſolute Affection; where ſuch refined and exalted Intelligencies exerciſe their Watch!

'Tis poſſible, that I am encompaſſed with ſuch a Cloud of Witneſſes; but it is certain, that God, the *infinite eternal* God, is now and ever with me. The great Jehovah, before whom all the Angelic Armies bow their Heads, and veil their Faces, ſurrounds me; ſupports me; pervades me. "In Him I live, move, "and have my Being."—The whole World is his auguſt Temple; and, in the moſt ſequeſtered Corner, I appear before his adorable Majeſty, no leſs than when I worſhip in his Houſe, or kneel at his Altar. In every Place, therefore, let me pay him the Homage of a Heart, cleanſed from Idols, and devoted to his Service. In every Circumſtance, let me feel no *Ambition*, but to *pleaſe* Him; nor covet any *Happineſs*, but to *enjoy* Him.

How ſublime is the Deſcription, and how ſtriking the Sentiment, in that noble Paſſage of the Pſalms! *Whither ſhall I go from thy Spirit, or whither ſhall I flee from thy Preſence? If I climb up into* the Heights of *Heaven, Thou art there* inthroned in Light. *If I go down to the* Depths of the *Grave, Thou art there alſo* in thy Pavilion of Darkneſs. *If I retire* to the remoteſt

Pace with the fleeting Minutes. Who have ſeized the important Fugitives; and engaged them in the Purſuit of *Wiſdom*, or devoted them to the Service of *Virtue*.

FUGITIVES indeed they are. Our Moments ſlip away ſilently and inſenſibly. The Thief ſteals not more unperceived from the pillaged Houſe.—And will the Runagates never ſtop? No: Where-ever we are, however employed, Time purſues his inceſſant Courſe. Though *we* are liſtleſs and dilatory; the great Meaſurer of our Days preſſes on; ſtill preſſes on, in his unwearied Career *; and whirls our Weeks, and Months, and Years away.—Is it not then ſurpriſingly ſtrange, to hear People complain of the *Tediouſneſs* of their Time, and how *heavy* it hangs upon their Hands? To ſee them contrive a Variety of amuſing Artifices, to accelerate its Flight, and get rid of its Burden?—Ah! thoughtleſs Mortals! Why need you urge the headlong Torrent? Your Days are ſwifter than a *Poſt*; which, carrying Diſpatches of the laſt Importance, with unremitted Speed ſcours the Road. They paſs away like the nimble *Ships*; which have the Wind in their Wings, and ſkim along the watry Plain. They haſten to their deſtined

* *Sed fugit interea, fugit irreparabile Tempus.* VIRG.

deſtined Period, with the Rapidity of an *Eagle*; which leaves the ſtormy Blaſt behind Her, while She cleaves the Air, and darts upon her Prey *.

Now the Day is gone, how *ſhort* it appears! When my fond Eye beheld it in *Perſpective*, it ſeemed a very conſiderable Space. Minutes, crowded upon Minutes; and Hours, ranged behind Hours; exhibited an extenſive Draught, and flattered me with a long Progreſſion of Pleaſures. But, upon a *retroſpective* View, how wonderfully is the Scene altered! The Landſchape, large and ſpacious, which a warm Fancy drew; brought to the Teſt of cool Experience, ſhrinks into a Span. Juſt as the Shores vaniſh, and Mountains dwindle to a Spot; when the Sailor, ſurrounded by Skies and Ocean, throws his laſt Look on his native Land.—How clearly do I now diſcover the



* *Job* ix. 25, 26. By theſe Three very expreſſive Images, the inſpired Poet repreſents the *unintermitted* and *rapid* Flight of Time. The Paſſage is illuſtrated with great Judgment, and equal Delicacy, in Dr. *Grey*'s moſt ingenious Abridgment of *Schultens*.—*Quæ tribus in elementis velociſſima, hic admirabili cum emphaſi congeruntur. In terris, nil pernicius curſore, & quidem læti quid ferente. Rapidius tamen adhuc undas, non ſecant, ſed ſupervolant, naviigiola papyro contexta. Omnium rapidiſſime aërem grandibus alis permetitur aquila, præcipiti lapſu ruens in prædam.*

Cheat! May it never impoſe upon my unwary Imagination, again! I find, there is nothing abiding on this Side Eternity. A *long* Duration, in a State of *finite* Exiſtence, is mere Illuſion.

PERHAPS, the *Healthy*, and the *Gay*, may not readily credit the ſerious Truth; eſpecially from a young Pen, and new to its employ. Let us then refer ourſelves to the Deciſion of the *Antient*. Aſk ſome venerable old Perſon, who is juſt marching off the mortal Stage; *How many have been the Days of the Years of thy Life**? It was a Monarch's Queſtion; and therefore can want no Recommendation, to the faſhionable World.—Obſerve, how he ſhakes his hoary Locks, and from a deep-felt Conviction replies; "*Fourſcore Years* have finiſhed their Rounds, "to furrow theſe Cheeks, and cloath this Head "in Snow. Such a Term may ſeem long and "large, to inconſiderate Youth. But O! how "ſhort, how ſcanty, to One that has made the "Experiment! *Short*, as a Gleam of tranſient "Sunſhine; *ſcanty*, as the Shadow that de-"parteth. Methinks, it was but Yeſterday, "that I exchanged my childiſh Sports, for "manly Exerciſes; and now, I am reſigning "them

* Gen. xlvii. 8. *Heb. Bib.*

"them both, for the Sleep of Death. As ſoon "as we are *born*, we begin to draw to our "*End*; and how ſmall is the Interval, between "the Cradle and the Tomb!"—O! may we believe this Teſtimony of mature Age! May every Evening bring it, with clearer Evidence, to our Minds! And may we form ſuch an Eſtimate of the little Pittance, while it is upon the advancing Hand, as we ſhall certainly make, when the Sands are all run down!

LET me add one Reflection on the *Work* to be *done*, while this Shuttle is flying through the Loom *. A Work of no ſmall Difficulty, yet of the utmoſt Conſequence!—Haſt Thou not ſeen, haſt Thou not known, the Excellent of the Earth; who were living Images of their Maker? His *Divine Likeneſs* was transfuſed into their Hearts, and beamed forth in all their Conduct. Beamed forth in Meekneſs of Wiſdom, and Purity of Affection; in all the tender Offices of Love, and all the noble Efforts of Zeal. To be ſtampt with the ſame beautiful Signature, and to be Followers of them, as they were of CHRIST; *this*, *this* is thy *Buſineſs*. On the Accompliſhment of this, thy eternal All depends. And, will an Affair of ſuch unſpeak-



* *My Days are ſwifter than a Weaver's Shuttle.* Job vii. 6.

able Weight, admit of a Moment's Delay, or conſiſt with the leaſt Remiſſneſs?—Eſpecially, ſince much of thy appointed Time is already elapſed; and the Remainder is *all Uncertainty*, ſave only that it is in the very Act to fly.—Or ſuppoſe, thou hadſt made a Covenant with the Grave, and waſt aſſured of reaching the Age of *Methuſelah*; how ſoon would even ſuch a Leaſe expire!—Extend it, if you pleaſe, ſtill farther; and let it be *co-exiſtent* with Nature itſelf. How inconſiderable is the Addition! For, yet a very little while, and the commiſſioned Archangel lifts up his Hand to Heaven, and ſwears by the Almighty Name, *That Time ſhall be no longer* *. Then, *abuſed* Opportunities,

* This alludes to the Beginning of *Revelations* the xth; which, abſtracted from its ſpiritual Meaning, and conſidered only as a ſtately *Piece* of *Machinery*, well deſerves our Attention; and, I will venture to ſay, has not its Superior, perhaps not its Equal, in any of the moſt celebrated Maſters of *Greece* and *Rome*.—All that is gloomy or beautiful in the Atmoſphere, all that is ſtriking or magnificent in every Element, is taken to heighten the Idea. Yet nothing is diſproportionate; but an uniform Air of ineffable Majeſty greatens, exalts, ennobles the Whole.—Be pleaſed to obſerve the *Aſpect* of this auguſt Perſonage. All the Brightneſs of the Sun, ſhines in his Countenance; and all the Rage of the Fire, burns in his Feet.—See his *Apparel*. The Clouds compoſe his Robe, and

nities, will never return; and *new* Opportunities, will never more be offered. Then, ſhould negligent Mortals wiſh—wiſh ever ſo

 paſſionately

and the Drapery of the Sky floats upon his Shoulders. The Rainbow forms his Diadem; and that which "compaſſeth the Heaven with a glorious Circle," is the Ornament of his Head.—Behold his *Attitude*. One Foot ſtands on the Ocean, the other reſts on the Land. The wide extended Earth, and the World of Waters, ſerve as Pedeſtals for thoſe mighty Columns.—Conſider the *Action*. His Hand is lifted up to the Height of the Stars. He ſpeaks; and the Regions of the Firmament echo with the mighty Accents, as the midnight Defart reſounds with the Lion's Roar. The Artillery of the Skies is diſcharged at the Signal; a Peal of ſevenfold Thunder ſpreads the Alarm; and prepares the Univerſe to receive his Orders.—To finiſh all; and give the higheſt Grandeur, as well as the utmoſt Solemnity, to the Repreſentation; hear the *Decree* that iſſues from his Mouth. He *ſwears by HIM that liveth for ever and ever*. In whatever Manner, ſo majeſtic a Perſon had expreſſed Himſelf; He could not fail of commanding univerſal Attention. But when he confirms his Speech, by a moſt ſacred and inviolable Oath; we are not only wrapt in ſilent Suſpenſe, but overwhelmed with the profoundeſt Awe.—He ſwears, *That Time ſhall be no longer*. Was ever Voice ſo full of Terror; ſo big with Wonder? It proclaims, not the Fall of Empires, but the final Period of Things. It ſtrikes off the Wheels of Nature; bids Ages and Generations ceaſe to roll; and with one potent Word, conſigns a whole World over to Diſſolution.—This is one among a Multitude of very ſublime and *maſterly Strokes*, to be found in that too much neglected Book—the BIBLE.

paſſionately—for a few Hours—a few Moments only—to be thrown back from the opening Eternity; *Thouſands* of Worlds would not be able to procure the Grant.

SHALL I, now, be induſtrious to ſhorten, what is no longer than a Span; or to quicken the Pace of what is ever on the Wing? Shall I ſquander away what is *unutterably important*, while it laſts; and, when once departed, is *altogether irrevocable!* O! my Soul, forbear the Folly; forbear the deſperate Extravagance. Wilt thou chide as a Loiterer, the Arrow that boundeth from the String; or ſweep away Diamonds, as the Refuſe of thy Houſe?—Throw Time away! Aſtoniſhing, ruinous, irreparable Profuſeneſs! Throw Empires away, and be blameleſs. But O! be parſimonious of thy Days; huſband thy precious Hours. They go connected, indiſſolubly connected, with Heaven or Hell*. *Improved*, they are a ſure Pledge of ever-

* I remember to have ſeen upon a Sun-dial in a Phyſician's Garden at *Northampton*, the following *Inſcription*; which, I think, is the moſt *proper Motto* for the Inſtrument, that meaſures our Time; and the moſt *ſtriking Admonition*, that can poſſibly be preſented to every Eye.

AB HOC MOMENTO PENDET ÆTERNITAS.

The weighty Senſe of which, I know not how to expreſs in *Engliſh*, more happily than in thoſe Words of Dr. *Watts*;

Good God! on what a *ſlender Thread*
[Or, on what a *Moment* of Time]
Hang everlaſting Things!

everlaſting Glory; *waſted*, they are a ſad Preface to never-ending Confuſion and Anguiſh.

WHAT a *profound Silence* has compoſed the World! So profound is the Silence, that my very Breath ſeems a Noiſe; the Ticking of my Watch is diſtinctly heard; if I do but ſtir, it creates a Diſturbance.—There is, now, none of that confuſed Din, from the tumultuous City: No Voice of jovial Ruſtics, from the neighbouring Meadow: No chirping Melody from the ſhady Thicket.—Every Lip is ſealed. Not the leaſt Whiſper, invades the Air; nor the leaſt Motion, ruſtles among the Boughs. *Echo* herſelf ſleeps unmoleſted. The expanded Ear, though all Attention, catches no Sound, but the liquid Lapſe of a diſtant murmuring Stream.

*All Things are huſh'd, as Nature's Self lay dead.*

IF, in the midſt of this deep and univerſal Compoſure, Ten Thouſand bellowing Thunders ſhould burſt over my Head; and rend the Skies, with their united Vollies; how ſhould I bear ſo *unexpected* a *Shock?* It would ſtun my Senſes, and confound my Thoughts. I ſhould ſhudder in every Limb; perhaps, ſink to the Earth with Terror.—Conſider then, O Mortals!

tals! conſider the much more *prodigious* and *amazing* Call, which will, ere long, alarm your ſleeping Bones. When the Tenants of the Tomb have ſlumbered, in the moſt undiſturbed Repoſe, for a Multitude of Ages; what an inconceivable Conſternation muſt the *Shout* of the *Archangel*, and the *Trump* of GOD, occaſion! Will it not wound the Ear of the Ungodly; and affright, even to Diſtraction, the impenitent Sinner? The ſtupendous Peal will ſound through the Vaſt of Heaven; will ſhake the Foundations of Nature; and pierce even the deepeſt Receſſes of the Grave. And how—O! how will the Priſoners of Divine Juſtice, be able to endure that tremendous *Summons*, to a far more tremendous Tribunal?—Do Thou, my Soul, liſten to the *ſtill Voice* of the Goſpel. Attend, in this thy Day, to the gracious Invitations of thy Saviour. Then, ſhall that great midnight Cry loſe its *Horror*, and be *Muſic* in thy Ears. It ſhall be welcome to thy reviving Clay, as the Tidings of Liberty, to the Dungeon Captive; as the Year of Jubilee to the haraſſed Slave. This, this ſhall be its charming Import; "*Awake, and ſing, ye that dwell in* "*Duſt**."

WHAT

* Iſa. xxvi. 19.

WHAT a general *Ceſſation* of *Affairs*, has this duſky Hour introduced! A little while ago, all was Hurry, Hurry. Life and Activity exerted themſelves in a thouſand buſy Forms. The City ſwarmed, with paſſing and repaſſing Multitudes. All the Country was Sweat and Duſt. The Air floated in perpetual Agitation, by the flitting Birds, and humming Bees. *Art* ſat prying with her piercing Eyes; while Induſtry plied her reſtleſs Hands.—But ſee; how all this fervent, and impetuous Buſtle, is fled with the ſetting Sun. The Beaſts are ſlunk, to their graſſy Couch; and the winged People are retired, to their downy Neſts. The Hammer has reſigned its ſounding Taſk, and the File ceaſes to repeat its flying Touches. Shut is the well-frequented Shop, and its Threſhold no longer worn by the Feet of numerous Cuſtomers. The Village-Swain lies drowned in Slumbers; and even his truſty Dog, who, for a conſiderable Time ſtood Centry at the Door, is extended at his Eaſe, and ſnores with his Maſter. —In every Place *Toil* reclines her Head, and *Application* folds her Arms. All Intereſts ſeem to be forgot; all Purſuits are ſuſpended; all Employment is ſunk away; ſunk away with thoſe fluttering Myriads, which lately ſported in the Sun's departing Rays.—'Tis like the Sabbath

bath of univerſal Nature; or as though the Pulſe of Life ſtood ſtill.

THUS will it be, with our infinitely momentous Concerns; when once *the Shadows of the Evening*, (that long Evening, which follows the Footſteps of Death!) *are ſtretched over Us.* The Dead cannot ſeek unto GOD; the Living, the Living alone, are poſſeſſed of this ineſtimable Opportunity*. "There is no Work or De-"vice, no Repentance or Amendment, in the "Grave†, whither We are All haſting." When once

* *Behold! Now is the accepted Time. Behold! Now is the Day of Salvation.* 2 Cor. vi. 2.

Haſte, haſte, He lies in wait, He's at the Door,
Inſidious Death! Shou'd his ſtrong Hand arreſt,
No Compoſition ſets the Pris'ner free.

† They who are gone down to the Grave, are repreſented (*Iſa.* xxxviii. 11.) by the Phraſe, חדל ישבי—rendered by *Vitringa*, *Thoſe that inhabit the* Land of *Intermiſſion* or *Ceſſation*.—Which prevents all Appearance of *Tautology* in the Sentence; and is, I think, a valuable *Improvement* of the Tranſlation: as it conveys an Idea, not only diſtinct from the preceding, but of a very poetical and very afflicting Nature; ſuch as was perfectly natural for the Royal Singer, and Royal Sufferer to dwell upon, in his deſponding Moments.—Thus interpreted the Senſe will run; "*I ſhall ſee Man no more*; I ſhall be "cut off from the chearful Ways of Men, and all the "Sweets of human Society. And, what is a farther Ag-"gravation of the threatened Stroke, *I ſhall*, by its tak-"ing

once that *cloſing Scene* is advanced, We ſhall have no other Part to act on this *earthly Theatre*. Then, the Sluggard, who has ſlumbered away Life in a criminal Inactivity, muſt lie down in hopeleſs Diſtreſs, and everlaſting Sorrow. Then, that awful Doom will take place, "He "that is *holy*, let Him be holy ſtill; and he "that is *filthy*, let Him be filthy for ever."

Is it ſo, my Soul? Is this the *only*, *only* Time allotted, for obtaining the great Reward, and making thy Salvation ſure? And art Thou lulled in a *vain Security*; or dreaming in a *ſupine Inadvertency?* Start, O! ſtart from thy Trance. Gird up the Loins of thy Mind, and work while it is Day. Improve the preſent Seed-time, that Eternity may yield a joyful Harveſt.—We eſpecially, who are Watchmen in *Iſrael*, and Miniſters of the glorious Goſpel; may *We* be awakened, by this Conſideration, to all Aſſiduity in our holy Office. Some or other

"ing place, *be* numbered *with Thoſe, that inherit the* "*Land of Ceſſation* and Inactivity. Where there will "be no more Poſſibility of contributing to the Happi-"neſs of my Kingdom; no more Opportunity of advan-"cing my Creator's Glory; or of making my own final "Salvation ſure."—A Sentiment like *this*, is grand, important, and full of Benevolence; removes all Suſpicion of unbecoming *Puſillanimity*, and does the higheſt *Honour* to the Monarch's Character.

other of *our People*, are ever and anon departing into the inviſible State; all *our Friends*, are making inceſſant Approaches to their long Home; and *we ourſelves*, ſhall very ſhortly be tranſmitted to the Confinement of the Tomb. *This* is the favourable Juncture, wherein alone we can contribute to their endleſs Welfare: This is the Criſis, the all-important *Criſis*, of their final Felicity. Inſtantly, therefore, let us pour in our wholeſome Inſtructions; inſtantly, let Us ply them with our earneſt Exhortations. A Moment's Delay, may be an irreparable Loſs; may be irretrievable Ruin. While we procraſtinate, a fatal Stroke may intervene; and place *Us*, beyond the Power of adminiſtering; or place *Them*, beyond all Poſſibility of receiving, any ſpiritual Good*.

How frequently is the Face of Nature *changed!* and, by changing, made more *agreeable!*—The long-continued Glitter of the Day, renders the ſoothing Shades of the Evening doubly welcome.

* The Caſe, repreſented by the Prophet (1 *Kings* xx. 40.) ſeems perfectly applicable on this Occaſion. *As thy Servant was buſy here and there, He was gone.* So, while we are either *remiſs* in our Function, or laying ourſelves out upon *inferior* Cares, the People of our Charge may be gone:—gone beyond the Influence of our Counſels; beyond the Reach of our Prayers:—gone into the *unchangeable* and eternal State.

welcome. Nor does the Morn ever purple the Eaſt with ſo engaging a Luſtre, as after the Gloom of a dark and diſmal Night.—At preſent, a *Calm* of Tranquility is ſpread through the Univerſe. The weary Winds have forgot to blow. The gentle Gales have fanned themſelves aſleep. Not ſo much as a ſingle Leaf nods. Even the quivering Aſpin reſts. *And not one Breath curls o'er the Stream.* — Sometimes, on the contrary, the *Tempeſt* ſummons all the Forces of the Air; and pours itſelf, with reſiſtleſs Fury, from the angry North. The whole Atmoſphere is toſſed into tumultuous Confuſion, and the watry World is heaved to the Clouds. The aſtoniſhed Mariner, and his ſtraining Veſſel, now ſcale the rolling Mountain, and hang dreadfully viſible on the broken Surge: now ſhoot, with head-long Impetuoſity, into the yawning Gulf; and neither Hulk, nor Maſt, is ſeen. The Storm ſweeps over the Continent: raves along the City-ſtreets: ſtruggles through the Foreſt-boughs; and terrifies the ſavage Nations with a Howl, more wildly horrid than their own. The knotty Oaks bend before the Blaſt; their iron Trunks groan; and their ſtubborn Limbs are daſhed to the Ground. The lofty Dome rocks; and even the ſolid Tower totters on its Baſis.

SUCH

Such Variations are kindly contrived, and with an evident Condeſcenſion to the Ficklenes of our Taſte. Becauſe, a perpetual Repetition of the *ſame* Objects, would create Satiety, and *Diſguſt*; therefore, the indulgent Father of our Race has diverſified the univerſal Scene, and bid every Appearance bring with it the Charm of Novelty.—This Circumſtance is *beneficial*, as well as *entertaining*. Providence, ever gracious to Mortals; ever intent upon promoting our Felicity; has taken Care to mingle, in the Conſtitution of Things, what is pleaſing to our Imagination, with what is ſerviceable to our Intereſts. The piercing Winds, and rugged Aſpect of Winter, render the balmy Gales, and flowery Scenes of Spring, peculiarly delightful. At the ſame Time, the keen Froſts mellow the Soil, and prepare it for the Hand of Induſtry. The ruſhing Rains impregnate the Glebe, and fit it to become a Magazine of Plenty. The Earth is a great *Laboratory*; and December's Cold collects the groſs Materials, which are *ſublimated* by the refining Warmth of May. The Air is a pure elaſtic Fluid; and were it always to remain in *this* motionleſs Serenity, it would loſe much of its active Spring; was it never agitated by *thoſe* wholſome Concuſſions, it would contract a noiſome, perhaps, a peſti-

a peſtilential Taint. In which Caſes, our Reſpiration, inſtead of purifying, would corrupt the vital Juices; inſtead of ſupplying Us with Refreſhment, would be a Source of Diſeaſes; or every Gaſp We draw, might be unavoidable Death *.—How then ſhould we admire, how ſhould we adore, that happy Union of Benignity and Wiſdom; which, from a *Variety* of Diſpenſations, produces an *Uniformity* of Good! Produces a perpetual Succeſſion of Delights; and an uninterrupted Series of Advantages!



* Conſidering the immenſe Quantity of Coals, and other combuſtible Materials, which are daily conſumed, and evaporate into the Air. Conſidering the numberleſs Steams, and Clouds of Smoke, which almoſt continually overwhelm populous Cities;—the noiſome Exhalations, which ariſe from thronged Infirmaries, and loathſome Jayls; from ſtagnating Lakes, and putrid Fens;—the Variety of offenſive and unwholſome Effluvia, which proceed from other Cauſes;—it is a very remarkable Inſtance of a Providence, at once tenderly kind, and infinitely powerful, that Mankind is not *ſuffocated* with Stench; that the Air is not *choaked* with Filth.—The Air is the *common Sewer*, into which ten thouſand times ten thouſand Nuiſances are inceſſantly diſcharged; yet it is preſerved ſo *thoroughly clear*, as to afford the moſt tranſparent Medium for Viſion; ſo *delicately undulatory*, as to tranſmit, with all imaginable Diſtinctneſs, every Diverſity of Sound; ſo *perfectly pure*, as to be the conſtant Refiner of the Fluids, in every Animal that breathes.

THE *Darkneſs* is now at its Height; and I cannot but admire the obliging Manner of its taking place. It comes not with a blunt and abrupt Incivility, but makes gentle and reſpectful Advances. A *precipitate* Tranſition, from the Splendors of Day, to all the Horrors of Midnight, would be inconvenient and frightful. It would bewilder the Traveller in his Journey; it would ſtrike the Creation with Amazement; and, perhaps, be pernicious to the Organs of Sight. Therefore the Gloom ruſhes not upon us inſtantaneouſly, but increaſes by ſlow Degrees; and, ſending *Twilight* before as its *Harbinger*, decently advertiſes us of its Approach. By this means, we are neither alarmed, nor incommodated, by the Change; but are able to take all ſuitable and timely Meaſures, for its Reception.—Thus graciouſly has Providence regulated, not only the *grand Viciſſitudes* of the Seaſons, but alſo the *common Interchanges* of Light and Darkneſs, with an apparent Reference to our Comfort.

NOW, the fierce *Inhabitants* of the *Foreſt* forſake their Dens. A thouſand grim Forms, a thouſand growling Monſters, pace the Deſart. Death is in their Jaws, while ſtung with Hunger, and athirſt for Blood, they roam their nightly Rounds.—Unfortunate the *Traveller*, who

who is overtaken by the Night, in thoſe diſmal Wilds! How muſt he ſtand aghaſt, at the mingled Yell of ravenous Throats, and Lions roaring after their Prey! Defend Him, propitious Heaven! or elſe He muſt ſee his endearing Spouſe, and hail his native Home, no more!—Now, the prowling Wolf, like a murderous Ruffian, dogs the Shepherd's Footſteps, and beſets his bleating Charge. The Fox, like a crafty Felon, ſteals to the thatched Cottage, and carries off the feathered Booty.

HAPPY for the World, were theſe the only Deſtroyers that walk in Darkneſs. But, alaſs! there are Savages in human Shape; who, muffled in Shades, infeſt the Abodes of civilized Life. The *Sons* of *Violence* make Choice of this Seaſon *, to perpetrate the moſt outrageous Acts of Wrong and Robbery. The *Adulterer* waiteth for the Twilight; and, baſer than the Villain on the Highway, betrays the Honour of his Boſom-friend. Now, *Faction* forms her cloſe Cabals, and whiſpers her traiterous Inſinuations. Now, *Rebellion* plans her accurſed Plots, and prepares the Train to blow a Nation into Ruin.



* ——When Night
Darkens the Streets, then wander forth the Sons
Of *Belial*, flown with Inſolence and Wine.
MILT.

Now Crimes, which hide their odious Heads in the Day, haunt the Seats of Society, and ſtalk through the Gloom with audacious Front. Now, the *Vermin* of the *Stews* crawl from their lurking Holes, to wallow in Sin, and ſpread Contagion through the Night. Each ſoothing himſelf with the fond Notion, That all is ſafe; That no Eye ſees.

ARE They then concealed? Prepoſterous Madmen! To draw the Curtain between their infamous Practices, and a little Set of Mortals; but lay them open, to all theſe chaſte and *wakeful Eyes* of Heaven *! As though the Moon and Stars were made, to light Men to their Revels, and not to GOD.—Are they then concealed? No, truly. Was every one of theſe vigilant Luminaries cloſed; an Eye *keener* than the Lightning's Flaſh, an Eye *brighter* than Ten thouſand Suns, beholds their every Motion. Their thickeſt Shades are beaming Day †, to the jealous Inſpector, and ſupreme Judge of human

* —— *Sed Luna videt, ſed Sidera Teſtes*
*Intendunt Oculos.*

† This is finely, and very forcibly, expreſſed by the Pſalmiſt: *If I ſay, Peradventure the Darkneſs ſhall cover me; then ſhall my Night be turned to Day.* Or, as it may be rendered ſomewhat more emphatically, *Even the Night ſhall be broad Daylight all around me.* Pſal. cxxxix. 10.

human Actions.—Deluded Creatures! have ye not heard, have ye not read, "That Clouds "and Darkneſs are HIS majeſtic Reſidence *?" In that very Gloom, to which you fly for Covert, he erects his Throne. What you reckon your *Screen*, is the Bar of his Tribunal. O! remember this! Stand in Awe, and ſin not. Remember, that the great and terrible GOD *is about your Path* †, when you take your midnight Range; is *about your Bed*, when you indulge the looſe Deſire; *and ſpies out all your Ways*, be they ever ſo ſecretly conducted, or artfully diſguiſed.

SOME Minutes ago, a Paſſenger croſſed along the Road. His Horſe's Foot ſtruck the Ground, and fetched Fire from a Flint. My Eye, tho at a Diſtance, catched the View; and ſaw, with *great Clearneſs*, the tranſient Sparkles: Of which, had I been ever ſo near, I ſhould not have diſcerned the *leaſt Glimpſe*, under the Blaze



* Pſal. xcvii. 2.

† The original Words are much ſtronger than the Tranſlation. זרית and הסכנתה ſignify, Thou *ſifteſt* my Path, and art *intimately acquainted with* all my Ways. The former, I apprehend, denoting the *exact* Cognizance, which the Almighty taketh; the latter implying the *conſtant* Inſpection, which he exerciſeth; over all the Circumſtances of our Conduct. *Pſal.* cxxxix. 2.

of Day.—So *, when Sickneſs has drawn a *Veil* over the Gaiety of our Hearts; when Miſfortunes have eclipſed the Splendor of our outward Circumſtances; how many *important Convictions* preſent themſelves, with the brighteſt Evidence! Under the Sunſhine of Proſperity, they lay undiſcovered; but, when ſome intervening Cloud has darkened the Scene, they emerge from their Obſcurity, and even glitter upon our Minds. Then, the *World*, that deluſive Cheat, confeſſes her Emptineſs: but JESUS, the bright and Morning-Star, beams forth with inimitable Luſtre. Then, *Vice* loſes all her fallacious Allurements; that painted Strumpet is horrible, as the Hags of Hell: but *Virtue*,

* I beg Leave to inform the *young Gentleman*, whoſe Name dignifies my Dedication; That *this* was a Remark of his honoured *Father*, when we rode together, and converſed in a duſky Evening. I mention this Circumſtance, partly, to ſecure the Paragraph from Contempt; partly, to give Him, and the World, an Idea of that eminently ſerious Taſte, which diſtinguiſhed my deceaſed Friend.—The *leſs obvious* the Reflection, the more clearly it diſcovers a Turn of Mind, remarkably ſpiritual; which would ſuffer nothing to eſcape, without yielding ſome religious Improvement. The *meaner* the Incident, the more admirable was that Fertility of Imagination; which could deduce the ſublimeſt Truths, from the moſt trivial Occurrences.

*Virtue*, deſpiſed Virtue, gains Lovelineſs from a louring Providence, and treads the Shades with more than mortal Charms.—May this reconcile me, and all the *Sons* of *Sorrow*, to our appointed Share of Suffering! If Tribulation tend to diſſipate the inward Darkneſs, and pour heavenly Dew upon our Minds; welcome Diſtreſs; welcome Diſappointment; welcome whatever our froward Fleſh, or peeviſh Paſſions, would *miſcal* Calamities. *Theſe light Afflictions, which are but for a Moment*, ſhall ſit eaſy upon our Spirits; ſince they befriend our Knowledge; promote our Faith; and ſo, "*work out for us*, "*a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of* "*Glory* *."



* 2 *Cor.* iv. 17. The great *Stephens*, that Oracle of *Grecian* Learning, tranſlates καθ' υπερβολην, *Quo nihil majus dici aut fingi poteſt.* But how does the Senſe riſe! How is the Idea inlarged, under *Two* ſuch forcible Expreſſions! καθ' υπερβολην εις υπερβολην.—The whole Verſe is a Maſterpiece of the beautiful *Antitheſis*, the lively *Deſcription*, and the nervous *Diction*. It is one of thoſe exquiſite Paſſages in the inſpired Writings, which, like ſome rich *aromatic Plants*, cannot be transferred from their own generous and native Soil, without being impaired in their Vivacity, and loſing much of their Delicacy. Perhaps, the following Verſion may be ſomewhat leſs injurious to the ſacred Original, than the common Tranſlation;—*Our very light Affliction, which is but juſt for the preſent Moment, worketh out a far more exceeding, an incomparably great, and eternal Weight of Glory.*

How has this Darkneſs ſnatched every ſplendid and graceful Object from my Sight! It has daſhed the Sponge over the Pictures of Spring, and deſtroyed all the *delicate Diſtinctions* of Things. Where are now the fine Tinges, which ſo lately charmed me from the glowing Parterre? The Bluſh is ſtruck out, from the Cheeks of the Roſe; and the ſnowy Hue, is dropt from the Lily. I caſt my Eyes toward a magnificent Seat; but the aſpiring Columns, and fair-expanded Front, are mingled in rude Confuſion. Without the Sun, all the Elegance of the blooming World, is a *mere Blank*; all the Symmetry of Architecture, is a *ſhapeleſs Heap*.

Is not this an expreſſive Emblem of the Lovelineſs, which the *Sun* of *Righteouſneſs* transfuſes into all that is amiable? Was it not for JESUS, and his Merits, I ſhould ſigh with Anguiſh of Spirit; even while I rove through Ranks of the moſt beautiful Flowers, or breathe amidſt a Wilderneſs of Sweets. Was it not for JESUS, and his Merits; I ſhould roam like ſome *diſconſolate Spectre*, even through the Smiles of Creation, and the Careſſes of Fortune. My Converſation in this World, though dreſſed in the moſt engaging Forms of external Pleaſure, would be like the Paſſage of a *condemned Malefactor*, through enamelled Meadows, and Bowers

of

of Bliſs, to be broke upon the Wheel, or to expire on the Rack. But a daily Reflection, on the LAMB's atoning Blood; a comfortable Truſt, that my Soul is reconciled through this divine Expiation; this is the Ray, the golden Ray, which irradiates the Face of the Univerſe. This is the *Oil* of *Beauty*, which makes all Things wear a chearful Aſpect; and the *Oil* of *Gladneſs*, which diſpoſes the Spectator to behold them with Delight*. This, this is the ſecret Charm, which teaches Nature, in all her Proſpects and all her Productions, ſo exquiſitely to pleaſe.

" MAN

* Thus applied, that fine Piece of *Flattery*, addreſſed to the *Heathen* Emperor, is ſtrictly and literally *true*.

*Vultus ubi tuus*
*Affulſit populo, gratior it dies,*
*Et ſoles melius nitent.* HORAT.

Which I would caſt in a *Chriſtian* Mould, and thus tranſlate:

When Faith preſents the Saviour's Death,
And whiſpers, " This is thine;"
Sweetly my riſing Hours advance,
And peacefully decline.

While ſuch my Views, the radiant Sun
Sheds a more ſprightly Ray;
Each Object ſmiles; all Nature charms:
I ſing my Cares away.

"MAN goeth forth to his Work, and to his "Labour, till the Evening." But then his Strength fails; his Spirits flag; and he ſtands in need, not only of ſome Reſpite from Toil, but of ſome kindly and ſovereign Refreſhments.—What an admirable Proviſion for this Purpoſe, is *Sleep!* Sleep introduces a moſt welcome Vacation, both for the Soul and Body. The Exerciſes of the Brain, and the Labours of the Hand, are at once diſcontinued. So that the *weary* Limbs repair their exhauſted Vigour; while the *penſive* Thoughts drop their Load of Sorrows, and the *buſy* ones reſt from the Fatigue of Application.—Moſt reviving Cordial! Equally beneficial to our animal and intellectual Powers. It ſupplies the fleſhly Machine, and keeps all its nice Movements in a proper Poſture for eaſy Play. It animates the thinking Faculties with freſh Alacrity, and rekindles their Ardor for the Studies of the Dawn. Without theſe enlivening Recruits, how ſoon would the moſt robuſt Conſtitution, be waſted into a *walking Skeleton*; and the moſt learned Sage, degenerate into a *hoary Idiot!*—Some Time ago, I beheld, with Surprize, poor *Florio*. His Air was wild; his Countenance meagre; his Thoughts roving, and Speech diſconcerted. Inquiring the Cauſe of this ſtrange Alteration, I was informed,

ormed, That, for ſeveral Nights, he had not loſed his Eyes in Sleep. For want of which *noble Reſtorative*, that ſprightly Youth, (who was once the Life of the Diſcourſe, and the Darling of the Company) is become a Spectacle of Miſery and Horror.

How many of my Fellow-creatures are, at this very Inſtant, confined to the Bed of Languiſhing; and complaining, with that illuſtrious Sufferer of old, *Weariſome Nights are appointed to me* *! Inſtead of indulging ſoft Repoſe, they are counting the tedious Hours; telling every ſtriking Clock; or meaſuring the very Moments, by their throbbing Pulſe. How many, haraſſed with *Pain*, moſt paſſionately long to make ſome little Truce with their Agonies, in peaceful Slumbers! How many, ſick with *Diſquietude*, and reſtleſs even on their downy Pillows, would purchaſe this tranſient Oblivion of their Woes, almoſt at any Rate!—That, which Wealth cannot procure; which Multitudes ſigh for in vain; thy GOD has beſtowed on Thee, Times out of Number. The *welcome Viſitant*, punctual at the needed Hour, has entered thy Chamber, and poured his Poppies round thy Couch. Has gently cloſed thy Eye-lids, and ſhed his ſlumberous Dews over all thy Senſes.

SINCE

* Job vii. 3.

SINCE Sleep is ſo abſolutely neceſſary; ſo ineſtimably valuable; obſerve, what a *fine Apparatus* Almighty Goodneſs has made, to accommodate us with the balmy Bleſſing. With how kind a Precaution, He removes whatever might obſtruct its Acceſs, or impede its Influence! He draws around us the *Curtain* of *Darkneſs*; which inclines us to a drowſy Indolence, and conceals every Object, that might too ſtrongly agitate the Senſe. He conveys *Peace* into our *Apartments*; and impoſes Silence, on the whole Creation. Every Animal is bidden to tread ſoftly, or rather to ceaſe from its Motion, when Man is retiring to his Repoſe.—May we not diſcern, in this gracious Diſpoſition of Things, the tender Cares of a *Nurſing-Mother*; who huſhes every Noiſe, and ſecludes every Diſturbance, when She has laid the Child of her Love to Reſt? *So*, by ſuch ſoothing Circumſtances, and gently-working Opiates, *HE giveth, to his Beloved, Sleep* *.

ANOTHER ſignal Inſtance of a Providence intent upon our Welfare, is, that we are preſerved *ſafe* in the Hours of *Slumber*. How are we then loſt to all Apprehenſion of Danger; even though the Murderer be at our Bed-ſide, or his naked Sword at our Breaſt! Deſtitute of all

* Pſal. cxxvii. 2.

all Concern for ourſelves, we are unable to *think of*, much more to *provide for*, our own Security. At theſe Moments, therefore, we lie open to innumerable Perils: Perils, from the reſiſtleſs Rage of Flames: Perils, from the inſidious Artifices of Thieves, or the outrageous Violence of Robbers: Perils, from the *irregular Workings** of our own Thoughts, and eſpecially from the Incurſions of our ſpiritual Enemy.

WHAT

* I think, it is referable only to a ſuperintending, and watchful *Providence*, that We are not hurried into the moſt *pernicious* Actions, when our Imagination is heated, and our Reaſon ſtupefied by Dreams.—We have ſometimes heard of unfortunate Perſons, who, walking in their Sleep, have thrown themſelves headlong from a Window, and been daſhed to Death on the Pebbles. And whence is it, that ſuch diſaſtrous Accidents are only *related* as Pieces of News, not experienced by Ourſelves, or our Families? Were *our* Minds more ſober in their Operations, or more circumſpect in their Regards? No, verily: Nothing could be more wild, than their Excurſions; and None could be more inattentive to their own Welfare. Therefore, if *We have laid Us down, and ſlept* in Peace; it was, becauſe the LORD vouchſafed Us the ſweet Refreſhment: if *We roſe again* in Safety; it was, *becauſe the LORD ſuſtained Us* with his unremitted Protection.

Will the candid Reader excuſe me, if I add a ſhort Story; or rather a *Matter of Fact*, ſuitable to the preceding Remark?—Two Perſons, who had been hunting together in the Day, ſlept together the following Night. One

with the raging Billows. Perhaps, with haſty Steps, they climb the craggy Cliff; and, with real Anxiety, fly from the imaginary Danger. Or elſe, benumbed with ſudden Fear, and finding themſelves unable to eſcape, they give up at once their Hopes, and their Efforts; and, though reclined on a Couch of Ivory, are ſinking, all helpleſs and diſtreſſed, in the furious Whirlpool. So unaccountable are the *Vagaries* of the *Brain*, while Sleep maintains its Dominion over the Limbs!

But is This the only Seaſon, when abſurd incoherent Irregularities play their Magic on our Minds? Are there not thoſe who *dream*, even in their *waking* Moments!—Some pride Themſelves in a Notion of ſuperior Excellency, becauſe the Royal Favour has annexed a few ſplendid Titles to their Names; or becauſe the dying Silkworm has bequeathed her fineſt Threads, to cover their Nakedneſs.—Others congratulate their own ſignal Happineſs; becauſe Loads of golden Lumber are amaſſed together in their Coffers; or promiſe themſelves a moſt ſuperlative Felicity indeed, when ſome Thouſands more are added to the uſeleſs Heap.—Nor are there wanting Others, who gape after *ſubſtantial* Satisfaction from *airy* Applauſe; and flatter themſelves with, I know not what, Immortality

in

in the momentary Buz of Renown.—Are any of Theſe a whit more reaſonable in their Opinions, than the poor ragged Wretch in his Reveries; who, while ſnoring under a Hedge, exults in the Poſſeſſion of his ſtately Palace, and ſumptuous Furniture?—If Perſons, who are *very Vaſſals* to their own *domineering* Paſſions, and led captive by numberleſs Temptations: if theſe Perſons pique themſelves with a Conceit of their Liberty, and fancy themſelves the *generous* and *gallant* Spirits of the Age: where is the Difference between Theirs, and the Madman's Frenzy; who, though chained to the Floor, is throned in Thought, and wielding an imaginary Sceptre?—In a Word; as many as borrow their Dignity from a Plume of Feathers, or the gaudy Trappings of Fortune; as many as ſend their Souls to ſeek for Bliſs in the Blandiſhments of Senſe, or in any Thing ſhort of the divine Favour, and a well-grounded Hope of the incorruptible Inheritance *; what are they, but Dreamers with their Eyes open; *delirious*, though in *Health?*

WOULD you ſee their Picture, drawn to the very Life; and the Succeſs of their Schemes, calculated with the utmoſt Exactneſs; caſt your



* Theſe give a ſacred, and home-felt Delight,
*Better Certainty* of *waking* Bliſs.
MILT. *Comus.*

Eye upon that fine Repreſentation, exhibited by the Prophet: *It ſhall be even as when a hungry Man dreameth, and behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his Soul is empty: Or as when a thirſty Man dreameth, and behold, he drinketh; but he awaketh, and behold, he is faint, and his Soul hath Appetite**. Such is the Race, and ſuch the Prize, of all thoſe Candidates for Honour and Joy; who run wide from the Mark of the high Calling of GOD, in CHRIST JESUS. They live in Vanity, and die in Woe.—Awaken us, merciful Lord, from theſe *noon-tide Trances!* Awaken us, while Conviction may turn to our Advantage, and not ſerve only to increaſe our Torment. O! let our "Eyes be enlightened, "to diſcern the Things that are excellent;" and no longer be impoſed upon by fantaſtic Appearances, which, however *pompous* they may ſeem, will prove more *empty* than the Viſions of the Night, more *tranſient* than the Dream that is forgotten.

HAVING mentioned Sleep and Dreams, let me once again conſider thoſe remarkable Incidents of our Frame: ſo very remarkable, that I may venture to call them, a kind of experimental *Myſtery*, and little leſs than a ſtanding *Miracle*.—

* Iſa. xxix. 8.

*Miracle.*—Behold the moſt *vigorous Conſtitution*, when ſtretched on the Bed of Eaſe, and totally reſigned to the Slumbers of the Night. Its Activity is oppreſſed with Fetters of Indolence; its Strength is conſigned over to a temporary Annihilation; the Nerves are like a Bow unſtrung, and the whole animal Syſtem is like a motionleſs Log.—Behold a Perſon of the moſt *delicate Senſations*, and *amiable Diſpoſitions*. His Eyes, though thrown wide open, admit not the viſual Ray; at leaſt, diſtinguiſh not Objects. His Ears, with the Organs unimpaired, and articulate Accents beating upon the Drum, perceive not the Sound; at leaſt, apprehend not the Meaning. The Senſes, and their exquiſitely fine Feelings, are overwhelmed with an unaccountable Stupefaction. You call him a *ſocial* Creature; but where are his ſocial Affections? He knows not the Father, that begat him; and takes no Notice of the Friend, that is as his own Soul. The Wife of his Boſom may expire by his Side, and He lie more unconcerned than a Barbarian. The Children of his Body, may be tortured with the ſevereſt Pangs; and He, even in the ſame Chamber, remain untouched with the leaſt Commiſeration.—Behold the moſt *ingenious Scholar:* whoſe Judgment is piercing, and able to trace the moſt intricate

Difficulties of Science; his Taſte refined, and quick to reliſh all the Beauties of Sentiment and Compoſition. Yet, at this Juncture, the thinking Faculties are unhinged, and the intellectual Oeconomy quite diſconcerted. Inſtead of cloſe-connected Reaſonings, nothing but a disjointed Huddle of abſurd Ideas: inſtead of well-digeſted Principles, nothing but a diſorderly Jumble of crude Conceptions. The moſt palpable Deluſions, impoſe upon his Imagination. The whole Night paſſes, and he frequently miſtakes it for a ſingle Minute: is not ſenſible of the Tranſition, hardly ſenſible of any Duration.

YET, no ſooner does the Morning dawn, and Day-light enter the Room; but this ſtrange Inchantment vaniſhes. The Man awakes, and finds himſelf *poſſeſſed* of all the valuable Endowments; which, for ſeveral Hours, were ſuſpended, or loſt. His Sinews are braced, and fit for Action. His Senſes are alert and keen. The romantic Viſionary brightens into the Maſter of Reaſon. The frozen or benumbed Affections, melt with Tenderneſs, and glow with Benevolence. And, what is beyond meaſure ſurprizing, the intoxicated Mind works itſelf ſober, not by *ſlow Degrees*; but, in the *Twinkling* of an Eye, recovers from its Perturbation.—Why does not the Stupor, which deadens

deadens all the nice Operations of the animal Powers, hold faſt its Poſſeſſion? When the Thoughts are once diſadjuſted, why are they not always in Confuſion? How is it, that they are rallied in a Moment; and, from the wildeſt Irregularity, reduced to the moſt orderly Array? —From an Inactivity, reſembling Death; how is the Body ſo *ſuddenly* reſtored, to Vigour and Agility? From Extravagancies, bordering upon Madneſs; how is the Underſtanding *inſtantaneouſly* re-eſtabliſhed, in Sedateneſs and Harmony?—Surely, "this is the LORD's Doing, "and it ſhould be marvellous in our Eyes:" ſhould awaken our Gratitude, and inſpirit our Praiſe.

THIS is the Time, in which *Ghoſts* are ſuppoſed to make their Appearance. Now, the *timorous Imagination* teems with Phantoms, and creates numberleſs Terrors to itſelf. Now dreary Forms, in ſullen State, ſtalk along the Gloom; or, ſwifter than Lightning, glide acroſs the Shades. Now, Voices more than mortal * are heard from the echoing Vaults, and Groans iſſue from the hollow Tombs. Now, melancholy



* *Vox quoque per lucos vulgo exaudita ſilentes*
*Ingens, & ſimulacra modis pallentia miris*
*Viſa ſub obſcurum noctis.*— VIRG.

Spectres visit the Ruins of antient Monasteries, and frequent the solitary Dwellings of the Dead. They pass and repass, in unsubstantial Images, along the forsaken Galleries; or take their determined Stand, over some lamented Grave.—How often has the School-boy fetched a long Circuit, and trudged many a needless Step, in order to avoid the haunted Church-yard? Or, if Necessity, sad Necessity, has obliged him to cross the Spot; where *human Skulls* are lodged below, and the *baleful Yews* shed supernumerary Horrors above; a thousand hideous Stories rush into his Memory. Fear adds Wings to his Feet; he scarce touches the Ground; dares not once look behind him; and blesses his good Fortune, if no frightful Sound purred at his Heels, if no ghastly Shape bolted upon his Sight.

'Tis strange, to observe the excessive Timidity, which possesses many Peoples Minds, on this *fanciful Occasion*; while they are void of all Concern, on others of the most *tremendous Import*. Those, who are startled, in any dark and lonely Walk, at the *very Apprehension* of a single Spectre; are nevertheless unimpressed at the *sure Prospect*, of entering into a whole World of disembodied Beings. Nay, are without any Emotions of Awe, though they know themselves

ſelves to be haſtening into the Preſence of the Great, Infinite, and Eternal Spirit.—Should ſome pale Meſſenger from the Regions of the Dead, draw back our Curtains at the Hour of Midnight; and, appointing ſome particular Place, ſay, as the horrid Apparition to *Brutus*, *I'll meet thee there* *: I believe, the boldeſt Heart would feel ſomething like a Panic; would ſeriouſly think upon the Adventure, and be in Pain for the Event. But, when a Voice from Heaven cries, in the awakening Language of the Prophet, *Prepare to meet thy GOD, O* Iſrael †; how little is the Warning regarded! How ſoon is it forgot! Prepoſterous Stupidity! To be *utterly unconcerned*, where it is the trueſt Wiſdom to take the Alarm; and to be *all Trepidation*, where there is nothing really terrible!—Do Thou, my Soul, remember thy Saviour's Admonition; "*I will forewarn you, whom you* "*ſhall fear.* Fear not theſe imaginary Horrors "of the Night. But fear that awful Being; "whoſe Revelation of Himſelf, though with



* The Story of *Brutus*, and his *evil Genius*, is well known. Nor muſt it be denied, that the preciſe Words of the Spectre to the Hero were, *I'll meet thee at* Philippi. But, as this would not anſwer my Purpoſe, I was obliged to make an Alteration, in the Circumſtance of *Place*.

† Amos iv. 12.

"Expreſſions of peculiar Mercy, made *Moſes*, "his favourite Servant, tremble exceedingly. "Whoſe Manifeſtation, when He appears with "Purpoſes of inexorable Vengeance, will make "*mighty Conquerors*; who were familiar with "Dangers, and eſtranged to Diſmay; call up- "on the Mountains to fall on them, and the "Rocks to cover them. The Menace of whoſe "majeſtic Eye, when He comes attended with "thouſand Thouſands of his immortal Hoſts, "will make the very Heavens cleave aſunder, "and the Earth flee away.—O! dread HIS "Diſpleaſure; ſecure HIS Favour; and then "Thou may'ſt commit all thy other Anxieties "to the Wind. Thou may'ſt laugh at every "other Fear."

THIS brings to my Mind a memorable and amazing Occurrence, recorded in the Book of *Job* *. Which is, I think, no inconſiderable Proof

* Job iv. 12, 14, &c.

† *Is a Proof of the real Exiſtence of Apparitions.*—If the Senſe, in which I have always underſtood this Paſſage, be true.—*Eliphaz*, I apprehend, was neither in a Trance, nor in a Dream, but perfectly awake.—Though He ſpeaks of Sleep; He ſpeaks of it, as fallen not upon *himſelf*, but upon *other* Men. He does not mention *Dreams*, though חלומות *Somnia*, would have ſuited the Verſe (if the Book be in Metre) altogether as well as חזיות *Viſiones*.—It could

of of the *real Exiſtence* of Apparitions †, on
e *very extraordinary* Emergencies; while it
ountenances thoſe Legions of idle Tales,
ch Superſtition has raiſed, and Credulity
ived. Since it teaches us, that if, at any
ıe, thoſe Viſitants from the unknown World,
ler themſelves perceivable by Mortals, it is
upon any Errand of frivolous Conſequence;
, to *convey Intelligences* of the utmoſt Mo-
ıt, or to *work Impreſſions* of the higheſt
ıantage.

'TWAS in the *Dead of Night*. All Nature
ſhrouded in Darkneſs. Every Creature was
buried

d not, ſurely be a *Wind*, as ſome tranſlate the Word
Becauſe, the Circumſtance of *ſtanding ſtill*, is not ſo
patible with the Nature of a Wind; and a Wind
ld have paſſed *above* Him, all *around* Him, as well as
*e* Him. Not to add, how low a Remark it is, and
unworthy of a Place in ſo auguſt a Deſcription, that
*could not diſcern the Form* of a Wind.—It ſeems, there-
, to have been a real Spirit; either *Angelical* as were
e, which preſented themſelves to *Abraham* reſting at
Door of his Tent, and to *Lot* ſitting in the Gate of
*m*; or elſe, the Spirit of ſome *departed Saint*, as in
Caſe of *Samuel*'s Apparition, or the famous Appear-
: of *Moſes* and *Elijah* on the Mount of Transfigura-
.—A Spirit, aſſuming ſome *Vehicle*, in order to be-
e viſible to the human Eye. Which, accordingly,
*baz* ſaw, exhibiting itſelf as an Object of Sight.
ſaw ſo obſcurely and indiſtinctly, that He was not
:, either to deſcribe its *Aſpect*, or to diſcern *whom* it
mbled.

buried in Sleep. The moſt profound Silence reigned through the Univerſe. In theſe ſolemn Moments, *Eliphaz* alone, all wakeful and ſolitary, was muſing upon ſublime and heavenly Subjects.—When, lo! an awful Being, from the inviſible Realms, burſt into his Apartment*. *A ſpirit paſſed before his Face.* Aſtoniſhment ſeized the Beholder. His Bones ſhivered within Him; his Fleſh trembled all over Him; and the Hair of his Head ſtood erect with Horror.—Sudden and unexpected, was the Appearance of the Phantom; not ſuch its Departure. *It ſtood ſtill*, to preſent itſelf more fully to his View. It made a ſolemn Pauſe, to prepare his Mind for ſome momentous Meſſage.—After which, a Voice

* I have given this ſolemn Picture a *modern* Dreſs, rather for the Sake of Variety and Illuſtration, than from any Apprehenſion of improving the admirable Original. Such an Attempt, I am ſenſible, would be more abſurdly vain, than to lacquer Gold, or paint the Diamond. The Deſcription, in *Eliphaz*'s own Language, is awful and affecting to the laſt Degree. A *Night-Piece*, dreſſed in all the Circumſtances of the deepeſt Horror. I queſtion, whether *Shakeſpeare* himſelf, though ſo peculiarly happy for his great Command of terrifying Images, has any Thing ſuperior or comparable to this. The Judges of fine Compoſition *ſee* the maſterly Strokes; and, I believe, the moſt ordinary Reader *feels* them, chilling his Blood, and awakening Emotions of Dread in his Mind.

Voice was heard. A Voice, for the Importance of its meaning, worthy to be had in everlaſting Remembrance; for the Solemnity of its Delivery, enough to alarm a Heart of Stone. It ſpoke; and this was the Purport of its Words;—
" *Shall* Man, *frail Man, be juſt before the mighty*
" *GOD? Shall* even *the moſt accompliſhed of*
" *Mortals be pure in the Sight of his Maker* *?
" *Behold*, and conſider it attentively. *He put*
" *no* ſuch *Truſt in his* moſt exalted *Servants*, as
" ſhould beſpeak them incapable of Defect.
" *And his* very *Angels He charged with Folly*;
" as ſinking, even in the higheſt Perfection of
" their Holineſs, infinitely beneath his tran-
" ſcendent Glories; as falling, even in all the
" Fidelity of their Obedience, inexpreſſibly
" ſhort

* There ſeems to be a ſignificant and beautiful *Gradation* in the *Hebrew* Words אנוש and גבר, which I have endeavoured to preſerve, by a Sort of *paraphraſtic Verſion*. —The Reader will obſerve a *new* Turn given to the Sentiment; preferable, I think, to that which our *Engliſh* Tranſlation exhibits. Not, *ſhall Man be more juſt than GOD?* But, *ſhall Man be juſt before*, or *in the Sight of GOD?* The Paſſage, thus rendered, ſpeaks a Truth incomparably more weighty, and needful to be inculcated. A Truth, exactly parallel to that humbling Confeſſion of the Prophet, *We are all as an unclean Thing*; and to that ſolemn Declaration of the Pſalmiſt, *In thy Sight ſhall no Man living be juſtified.*

" ſhort of the Homage due to his adorable " Majeſty. If angelic Natures muſt not pre- " ſume to juſtify, either Themſelves, or their " Services, before uncreated Purity; *how much* " *more* abſurd is ſuch a Notion, how much " more impious ſuch an Attempt, in *Them* " *that dwell in Houſes of Clay*; whoſe Original " is from the Duſt, and whoſe State is all " Imperfection!"

I WOULD obſerve from hence, the very ſingular Neceſſity of that *Poverty* of *Spirit*, which intirely *renounces* its own Attainments; and moſt thankfully *ſubmits* to the Righteouſneſs of the incarnate GOD.—To inculcate this Leſſon, the Son of the Bleſſed came down from Heaven; and preſſed no other Principle, with ſo repeated* an Importunity, on his Hearers. To inſtil the ſame Doctrine, the HOLY GHOST touched the Lips of the Apoſtles with ſacred Eloquence; and made it an eminent Part of their Comiſ-

ſion,

* It is well worthy of our Obſervation, ſays an excellent Commentator, " That no one Sentence uttered by " our LORD, is ſo frequently repeated as this; *Whoſo-* " *ever ſhall exalt himſelf, ſhall be abaſed*; *and he that ſhall* " *humble himſelf, ſhall be exalted.*" Which *often* occurs in the Evangeliſts; but is *never* duly accompliſhed in Us, till We diſclaim all Pretenſion to Merit and Righteouſneſs of our own, and ſeek them only in the Atonement and Obedience of JESUS CHRIST.

ſion, " to demoliſh every high Imagination." That no Expedient might be wanting, to give t a deep and laſting Efficacy on the human Mind; a Phantom ariſes from the Valley of the ſhadow of Death, or a Teacher deſcends from he Habitation of Spirits.—Whatever then we egleƈt; let us not neglect to cultivate *this race*, which has been ſo variouſly taught, ſo owerfully enforced.

HARK! a *doleful Voice*—With ſudden Starts, id hideous Screams, it diſturbs the Silence of e peaceful Night. 'Tis the *Screech-owl*, ſome- nes in frantic, ſometimes in diſconſolate Ac- nts, uttering her Woes *. She flies the vocal rove, and ſhuns the Society of all the feathered hoir. The blooming Gardens, and flowery leads, have no Charms for her. Obſcene ades, ragged Ruins, and Walls overgrown ith Ivy, are her favourite Haunts. Above, e mouldering Precipice nods, and threatens a Fall:

* *Solaque culminibus ferali carmine bubo*
*Sæpe queri, longaſque in fletum ducere voces.*

hus ſung that charming Genius, that Prince of the an- nt Poets, that moſt conſummate Maſter of Elegance d Accuracy; all whoſe *Sentiments* are Nature, whoſe ery *Deſcription* is a Picture, whoſe whole *Language* is uſic—VIRGIL.

Fall: below, the Toad crawls, or the poiſonous Adder hiſſes. The ſprightly Morning, which awakens other Animals into Joy, adminiſters no Pleaſure to this gloomy Recluſe. Even the ſmiling Face of Day, is her Averſion; and all its lovely Scenes create nothing but Uneaſineſs.

So, juſt ſo, would it fare with the *Ungodly*; were it poſſible to ſuppoſe their Admiſſion, into the chaſte and bright Abodes of endleſs Felicity. They would find nothing but Diſappointment and Shame, even at the Fountain-Head of Happineſs and Honour.—For how could the Tongue, habituated to *Profaneneſs*, taſte any Delight in the harmonious Adorations of Heaven? How could the Lips, cankered with *Slander*, reliſh the Raptures of everlaſting Praiſe? Where would be the Satisfaction of the *vain* Beauty, or the *ſupercilious* Grandee? Since, in the Temple of the Skies, no Incenſe of Flattery would be addreſſed to the former; nor any obſequious Homage paid to the latter.—The ſpotleſs and inconceivable Purity of the bleſſed GOD, would *flaſh* Confuſion on the laſcivious Eye. The envious Mind, muſt be on a *Rack* of ſelf-tormenting *Paſſions*; to obſerve Millions of happy Beings, ſhining in all the Perfections of Glory, and ſolacing themſelves in the Fulneſs of Joy.—

In

In ſhort; the unſanctified Soul, amidſt holy and triumphant Spirits; even in the refined Regions of Bliſs and Immortality; would be like this melancholy Bird, *diſlodged* from her darkſome Retirement, and *impriſoned* under the Beams of Day *.

THE Voice of this Creature ſcreaming at our Windows, or of the Raven croaking over our Houſes, is, they ſay, a *Token* of approaching *Death*. There are Perſons, who would regard ſuch an Incident, with no ſmall Degree of Solicitude. Trivial as it is; it would damp their Spirits,

* I would beg of the Reader to obſerve, with what *Emphaſis* and *Propriety* our LORD touches this important Point, in his memorable Reply to *Nicodemus*. *Verily, verily, I ſay unto thee, Except a Man be born again, He* CANNOT *enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*; q. d. "I "wave the *Authority* of the Supreme Judge, and ſpeak with "the *Condeſcenſion* of a Teacher in *Iſrael*. Though I "might, without being liable to the leaſt Controul, paſs "it into a ſovereign Decree: That unrenewed Mortals, "who are Slaves to corrupt Appetite, SHALL NOT "enter the Habitations of the Juſt; I rather chooſe to "repreſent it, as a Caſe *utterly impoſſible*; and charge "the Calamity, not upon Divine Severity, but upon "human Folly. Such Perſons, from the very Nature of "Things, preclude themſelves; they incapacitate their "own Minds; and Contrarieties muſt be reconciled, be-"fore *They*, in their unregenerate Condition, *can* be Par-"takers of thoſe ſpiritual and ſublime Delights." *John* iii. 3.

Spirits, perhaps, break their Reſt.—One cannot but wonder, that People ſhould ſuffer themſelves to be affrighted at ſuch *fantaſtical*, and yet be quite unaffected with *real*, Preſages of their Diſſolution. Real Preſages of this awful Event, addreſs us from every Quarter. What are theſe *incumbent Glooms*, which overwhelm the World, but a kind of *Pall* provided for Nature; and an Image of that long Night, which will quickly cover the Inhabitants of the whole Earth? What an Affinity has the Sleep*, which will very ſoon weigh down my drowſy Eye-lids, with that State of intire Ceſſation, in which all my Senſes muſt be laid aſide! The ſilent Chamber, and the Bed of Slumber, are a very ſignificant Repreſentation of the Land, where all Things are huſhed; all Things are forgotten.—What meant that deep *Death-Bell Note*, which, the other Evening, ſaddened the Air? Laden with heavieſt Accents, it ſtruck our Ears, and ſeemed to knock at the Door of our Hearts. Surely, it brought a Meſſage to ſurviving Mortals, and thus the Tidings ran: "Mortals, the Deſtroyer of your Race is on "his Way. The laſt Enemy has begun the "Purſuit; and is gaining Ground upon you, "every

* *Et Conſanguineus Lethi Sopor.* VIRG.

"every Moment. His Paths are ſtrewed with "Heaps of Slain. Even now, his Javelin has "laid one of your Neighbours in the Duſt; "and will ſoon, very ſoon, aim the *inevitable* "*Blow* at each of your Lives."

We need not go down to the Charnel-Houſe, nor carry our Search into the Repoſitories of the Dead; in order to find Memorials of our impending Doom. A Multitude of theſe Remembrancers are planted in all our Paths, and point the heedleſs Paſſengers to their long Home. I can hardly enter a conſiderable Town, but I meet the funeral Proceſſion, or the Mourners going about the Streets. The *Hatchment* ſuſpended on the Wall, or the *Crape* ſtreaming in the Air, are ſilent Intimations; that both *Rich* and *Poor* have been emptying their Houſes, and repleniſhing their Sepulchres. I can ſcarce join in any Converſation, but mention is made of ſome that are given over by the Phyſician, and hovering on the Confines of Eternity; of others, that have juſt dropt their Clay amidſt weeping Friends, and are gone to appear before the Judge of all the Earth. There's not a *News-Paper* comes to my Hand; but amidſt all its entertaining Narrations, reads ſeveral ſerious *Lectures* of *Mortality*. What

elſe are the repeated Accounts—of Age, worn out by ſlow-conſuming Sickneſſes—of Youth, daſhed to Pieces by ſome ſudden Stroke of Caſualty—of Patriots, exchanging their Seats in the Senate, for a Lodging in the Tomb—of Miſers, reſigning their Breath, and (O relentleſs Deſtiny!) leaving their very Riches for others? Even the Vehicles of our Amuſement, are Regiſters of the Deceaſed; and the Voice of *Fame* ſeldom ſounds, but in Concert with a *Knell.*

THESE Monitors croud every Place; not ſo much as the Scenes of our Diverſion excepted. What are the Decorations of our public Buildings, and the moſt elegant Furniture of our Parlours; but the Imagery of Death, and Trophies of the Tomb? That marble Buſt; and thoſe gilded Pictures; how ſolemnly they *recognize* the Fate of others, and ſpeakingly *remind* us of our own!—I ſee, I hear, and O! I feel this great Truth. It is interwoven with my Conſtitution. The frequent Decays of the Structure foretel its final Ruin. What are all the Pains, that have been darted through my Limbs; what every Diſeaſe, that has aſſaulted my Health; but the *advanced Guards* of the Foe? What are the Languors and Wearineſs, that attend the Labours of each revolving Day; but

but the more *ſecret Practices* of the Adverſary, ſlowly undermining the earthly Tabernacle?

AMIDST ſo many Notices, ſhall we go on thoughtleſs and unconcerned? Can none of theſe Prognoſtics, which are ſure as Oracles, awaken our Attention, and engage our Circumſpection? *Noah*, 'tis written, *being warned of GOD, prepared an Ark.* Imitate, my Soul, imitate this excellent Example. Admoniſhed by ſuch a Cloud of Witneſſes, be continually putting thyſelf in a Readineſs for the laſt Change. Let not that Day, of which thou haſt ſo many infallible Signs, come upon thee unawares. — Get the *Ivy untwined*, and thy Affections diſentangled from this inchanting World; that thou may'ſt be able to quit it, without Reluctance. Get the dreadful *Hand-writing cancelled*, and all thy Sins blotted out; that thou may'ſt depart in Peace, and have nothing to fear at the deciſive Tribunal. Get, O! get thyſelf intereſted in the Redeemer's *Merits*, and transformed into his ſacred *Image*; then, ſhalt Thou be meet for the Inheritance of Saints in Light, and may'ſt even deſire to be diſſolved, and to be with CHRIST.

SOMETIMES, in my Evening Walk, I have heard

——— *The wakeful Bird*
*Sing darkling, and, in ſhadieſt Covert hid,*
*Tune her nocturnal Note* *.

How different the *Airs* of this charming Songſter, from thoſe harſh and boding *Outcries!* The little Creature ran through all the Variations of Muſic; and ſhewed herſelf Miſtreſs of every Grace, which conſtitutes or embelliſhes Harmony.—Sometimes, ſhe ſwells a manly Throat, and her Song kindles into Ardor. The Tone is ſo *bold*, and ſtrikes with ſuch Energy, you would imagine the ſprightly Serenader in the very next Thicket. Anon, the Strain *languiſhes*, and the mournful Warbler melts into Tenderneſs. The melancholy Notes juſt ſteal upon the Shades, and faintly touch your Ear; or, in ſoft and ſadly-pleaſing Accents, they ſeem to die along the diſtant Vale. Silence is pleaſed, and Night liſtens to the trilling Tale.

WHAT an Invitation is this, to ſlip away from the thronged City! This coy and modeſt Minſtrel, entertains only the *Lovers* of *Retirement*. Thoſe, who are carouſing over their Bowls, or ranting at the riotous Club, loſe this Feaſt of Harmony.—In like manner, the Pleaſures of Religion, and the Joy of Reconciliation with GOD; the Satisfactions ariſing, from an

* MILT. *Par. Loſt*, B. III. l. 38.

an eſtabliſhed Intereſt in CHRIST, and from the Proſpect of a bliſsful Immortality; theſe are all loſt to the Mind, that is ever *in the Croud*; and dares not, or delights not, to retire into itſelf.—Are we charmed with the Nightingale's Song? Do we wiſh to have it nearer, and hear it oftener? Let us ſeek a renewed Heart, and a reſigned Will; a Conſcience that whiſpers Peace, and Paſſions that are tuned by Grace. Then, ſhall we never want a Melody in our own Breaſts, far more *muſically pleaſing*, than ſweet *Philomela*'s ſweeteſt Strains.

As different as the Voices of theſe Birds, are the *Circumſtances* of thoſe few Perſons, who continue awake.—Some are ſquandering, Pearls ſhall I ſay, or Kingdoms? No; but what is unſpeakably more precious, Time. Squandering this ineſtimable Talent, with the moſt ſenſeleſs and wanton Prodigality. Not content with allowing a few *ſpare Minutes*, for the Purpoſe of neceſſary Recreation; they laviſh many Hours, devote *whole Nights*, to that idle Diverſion of ſhuffling, ranging, and detaching a Set of painted Paſteboards.—Others, inſtead of this buſy Trifling, act the Part of their own Tormentors. They even piquet themſelves *, and



* Alluding to a very painful Puniſhment, inflicted on Delinquents among the Soldiery.

call it Amuſement; they are torn by wild Horſes, yet term it a Sport. What elſe is the *Gameſter*'s Practice? His Mind is ſtretched on the Tenter-Hooks of anxious Suſpenſe, and agitated by the fierceſt Extremes of Hope and Fear? While the Dice are rattling, his Heart is throbbing; his Fortune is tottering; and, poſſibly, at the very next Throw, the one ſinks in the Gulf of Ruin, the other is hurried into the Rage of Diſtraction.

Some, ſnatched from the Bloom of Health, and the Lap of Plenty, are confined to the *Chamber* of *Sickneſs*. Where they are conſtrained, either to plunge into the everlaſting World, in an unprepared Condition; or elſe (ſad Alternative!) to think over all the Follies of a heedleſs Life, and all the Bitterneſs of approaching Death. The Diſeaſe rages; it baffles the Force of Medicine; and urges the reluctant Wretch, to the Brink of the Precipice. While Furies rouſe the Conſcience, and point at the bottomleſs Pit below.—Perhaps, his *drooping Mother*, deprived long ago of the Huſband of her Boſom, and bereft of all her other Offspring; is, even now, receiving the Blow which conſummates her Calamities*. In vain, ſhe tries to

* This brings to my Mind one of the deepeſt *Mourning-Pieces*, extant in the Productions of the Pen. The ſacred Hiſtorian

to aſſwage the Sorrows of a beloved Son; in vain, ſhe attempts, with her tender Offices, to prolong a Life, dearer than her own. He faints in her Arms; he bows his Head; he ſinks in Death. Fatal, doubly fatal, that laſt expiring Pang! While it diſlodges the unwilling Soul, it rends an *only Child*, from the yearning Embraces of a Parent; and tears away the Support of her Age, from a diſconſolate Widow.

WHILE *Thoſe* long for a Reprieve; *Others* invite the Stroke. Quite weary of the World, with



Hiſtorian paints it, in all the Simplicity of Stile, yet with all the Strength of Colouring.—When *JESUS came nigh to the Gate of the City, behold! there was a dead Man carried out, the only Son of his Mother, and ſhe was a Widow.*—What a Gradation is here! How pathetically beautiful! every freſh Circumſtance, widens the Wound; aggravates the Calamity; till the Deſcription is worked up into the moſt finiſhed Picture of exquiſite and inconſolable Diſtreſs.—He was a *young Man:* cut off in the Flower of Life, amidſt a Thouſand gay Expectations, and ſmiling Hopes. A Son; an *only* Son; the afflicted Mother's All. So that none remained to preſerve the Name, or perpetuate the Family. What rendered the Caſe ſtill more deplorable, *She was a Widow:* left intirely deſolate; abandoned to her Woes; without any to ſhare her Sorrows, or to comfort her under the irreparable Loſs.—Is not this a fine Sketch of the *Impaſſioned* and *Picturesque?* Who can conſider the Narrative, with any Attention; and not feel his Heart penetrated, with a tender Commiſeration? *Luke* vii. 12.

with a reſtleſs Impatience, they ſigh for Diſſolution. Some, pining away under the tedious Decays of an incurable *Conſumption*; or gaſping for Breath, and almoſt ſuffocated, by an Inundation of *dropſical* Waters. On ſome, a relentleſs *Cancer* has faſtened its envenomed Teeth; and is gnawing them, though in the midſt of bodily Vigour, in the midſt of pitying Friends, gradually to Death. Others are on a Rack of Agonies, by convulſive Fits of the *Stone*. O! how the Pain writhes their Limbs; how the Sweat bedews their Fleſh; and their Eye-balls wildly roll! Methinks, the Night condoles with theſe her diſtreſſed Children; and ſheds dewy Tears, over their ſorrowful Abodes. —But of all Mortals, *They* are the moſt exquiſitely miſerable, who groan beneath the Preſſure of a *melancholy* Mind; or ſmart under the Laſhes of a *reſentful* Conſcience. Though robed in Ermine; or covered with Jewels; the State of a Slave chained to the Gallies, or of an Exile condemned to the Mines, is a perfect Paradiſe compared with theirs.

O! that the *Votaries* of *Mirth*; whoſe Life is a continued Round of Merriment and Whim; would beſtow one ſerious Reflection, on this *Variety* of human *Woes!* It might teach them to be leſs enamoured, with the few languid Sweets;

Sweets; that are thinly ſcattered through this Vale of Tears, and environed with ſuch a Multitude of ragged Thorns. It might teach them, no longer to dance away their Years, with a giddy *rambling Impulſe*; but to aſpire, with a determined Aim, after thoſe happy Regions, where Delights, abundant and unembittered, flow.

CAN there be Circumſtances, which a Man of Wiſdom would more earneſtly deprecate, than theſe ſeveral Inſtances of grievous Tribulation? There are; and, what is very aſtoniſhing, they are frequently the Deſire and the Choice of Thoſe, who fancy themſelves the ſole Heirs of Happineſs. Thoſe I mean, who are launching out into the Depths of *Extravagance*, and running exceſſive Lengths of *Riot*: who are proſtituting their Reputation, and ſacrificing their Peace, to the Gratification of their Luſts; ſapping the Foundation of their Health, in Debaucheries; or ſhipwrecking the Intereſts of their Families, in their Bowls. And, what is worſe, are forfeiting the Joys of an eternal Heaven, for the *fordid* Satisfactions of the Beaſt; for the *tranſitory* Senſations of an Hour.—Ye Slaves of Appetite, how far am I from envying your groſs Senſualities, and voluptuous Revels! Little, ah! little are you ſenſible;

ſible; that, while Indulgence ſhowers her Roſes, and Luxury diffuſes her Odours; they ſcatter *Poiſons* alſo, and ſhed unheeded *Bane**. Evils, incomparably more malignant, than the Wormwood and Gall of the ſharpeſt Affliction.—Since Death is in the Drunkard's Cup; and worſe than Poinards in the Harlot's Embrace, may it ever be the Privilege of the Man whom I love, to go without his Share of theſe *peſtilent Sweets*†!

ABUNDANCE of living Sparks glitter in the Lanes, and twinkle under the Hedges. I ſuppoſe, they are the *Glow-worms*; which have lighted their little Lamps, and obtained Leave, through the Abſence of the Sun, to play a feeble Beam. A faint Glimmer, juſt ſerves to render them perceivable; without tending at all to diſſipate the Shades, or making any Amends for the departed Day.—Should ſome weather-beaten Traveller, dropping with Wet, and ſhivering with

* *Yet; in the Flow'rs that wreathe the ſparkling Bowl,*
*Fell Adders hiſs, and pois'nous Serpents roll.*

† *Quam ſuave eſt ſuavitatibus iſtis carere!* Was St. *Auguſtine*'s pious Exclamation. The Subſtance of which Mr. *Pope* has expreſſed, with more Simplicity, and with no leſs Dignity.

*Count all th' Advantage proſp'rous Vice attains,*
*'Tis but what Virtue flies from, and diſdains.*

Cold, hover round this *Mimicry* of *Fire*; der to dry his Garments, and warm his nbed Limbs. Should ſome bewildered eller; groping for his Way, in a ſtarleſs t and trackleſs Deſart; take one of theſe *d Tapers*, as a Light to his Feet, and a rn to his Paths. How certainly would he one, and the other, be fruſtrated of their ſtation!—And are *They* more likely to d, who, neglecting that ſovereign Balm, diſtilled from the Croſs; apply any *carnal* ſion, to heal the Anxiety of the Mind? deaf to the infallible Deciſions of Reve-; reſign themſelves over to the erroneous *tures* of *Reaſon*, in order to find the Way eadeth unto Life? Or laſtly, who have irſe to the *Froth* of this vain World, for a ſtory Portion, and a ſubſtantial Happi-Their Conduct is in no Degree wiſer; Diſappointment equally ſure; and their rriage infinitely more diſaſtrous. To in the delicate Language of a ſacred r, "they ſow the Wind, and will reap Whirlwind *."

ſpeak more plainly; the Pleaſures of the l, which we are *All* ſo prone to dote up-nd the Powers of fallen Reaſon, which

*Some*

* Hoſ. viii. 7.

*Some* are apt to idolize *; are not only vain, but treacherous. Not only a *painted Flame*, like theſe ſparkling Animals; but much like thoſe unctuous Exhalations, which ariſe from the marſhy Ground, and often dance before the Eyes of the benighted Way-faring Man. Kindled into a ſort of Fire, they perſonate a Guide,

* I hope, it will be obſerved, That I am far from decrying that noble Faculty of Reaſon, when exerted in her proper Sphere; when acting in a *deferential Subordination* to the revealed Will of Heaven. While She exerciſes her Powers, within theſe appointed Limits, She is unſpeakably ſerviceable; and cannot be too induſtriouſly cultivated.—But, when ſhe ſets up herſelf in *proud Contradiſtinction* to the ſacred Oracles; when, all arrogant and ſelf-ſufficient, She ſays to the Word of Scripture, *I have no Need of Thee:* She is then, I muſt be bold to maintain, not only a Glow-worm, but an *Ignis fatuus*; not only a Bubble, but a Snare.

May not this Remark, with the ſtricteſt Propriety; and without the leaſt Limitation; be applied to the *Generality* of our modern Romances, Novels, and theatrical Entertainments? Theſe are commonly calculated, to inflame a wanton Fancy. Or, if conducted with ſo much Modeſty, as not to debauch the Affections; they pervert the Judgment, and bewilder the Taſte. By their incredible Adventures; their extravagant Parade of Gallantry; and their Characters, widely different from Truth and Nature; they inſpire fooliſh Conceits: beget idle Expectations: introduce a Diſguſt of genuine Hiſtory: and indiſpoſe their Admirers, to acquieſce in the *decent* Civilities, or to reliſh the *ſober* Satisfactions, of common Life.

Guide, and ſeem to offer their Service: but, blazing with *deluſive Light*, miſlead their Follower into hidden Pits, headlong Precipices, and unfathomable Gulfs. Where, far from his beloved Friends, far from all Hopes of Succour, the unhappy Wanderer is ſwallowed up, and loſt.

NOT long ago, we obſerved a very ſurpriſing Appearance in the Weſtern Sky. A *prodigious Star* took its flaming Route through thoſe Coaſts; and trailed, as it paſſed, a tremendous Length of Fire, almoſt over half the Heavens. Some, I imagine, viewed the portentous Stranger, with much the ſame anxious Amazement; as *Belſhazzar* beheld the Hand-writing upon the Wall. Some looked upon it as a *bloody* * *Flag*; hung out by Divine Reſentment, over a guilty World. Some read, in its glaring Viſage, the Fate of Nations, and the Fall of Kingdoms †. To others, it ſhook, or ſeemed to ſhake, *Peſtilence* and *War* from its horrid Hair.—For my Part; I am not ſo ſuperſtitious as to regard, what every Aſtrologer has to prognoſticate; upon the Acceſſion of a *Comet*,

* — *Liquida ſi quando nocte cometæ*
Sanguinei lugubre *rubent*.— VIRG.

† ——— *Crinemque timendi*
*Sideris*, & *terris* mutantem regna *cometem*.
LUCAN.

*Comet*, or the Projection of its huge *vapoury Train*. Nothing can be more precarious, and unjuſtifiable, than to draw ſuch Concluſions from ſuch Events: Since they neither are preternatural Effects, nor do they throw the Frame of Things into any Diſorder. I would rather adore that omnipotent Being, who rolled thoſe ſtupendous Orbs from his creating Hand; and leads them, by his providential Eye, through unmeaſurable Tracts of Æther. Who bids them, now, approach the Sun, and glow with unſufferable Ardors *; now, retreat to the utmoſt Bounds of our Planetary Syſtem, and make their Entry among other Worlds.

THEY are harmleſs Viſitants. I acquit them from the Charge of cauſing, or being acceſſary to, deſolating Plagues. Would to GOD, there were no other more formidable Indications, of *approaching Judgments*, or *impending Ruin!* But, alaſs! when Vice becomes predominant, and Irreligion almoſt epidemical: when the Sabbaths of a jealous GOD, are notoriouſly profaned;

* "The Comet in the year 1680, according to Sir *Iſaac* "*Newton*'s Computation, was, in its neareſt Approach, "above 166 Times nearer the Sun than the Earth is. "Conſequently, its Heat was then 28000 Times greater "than that of Summer. So that a Ball of Iron as big "as the Earth, heated by it, would hardly become cool "in 50000 Years." DERH. *Aſtr. Theol.* p. 237.

profaned; and that "Name, which is great, "wonderful, and holy," is proſtituted to the meaneſt, or abuſed to the moſt execrable Purpoſes: when the Worſhip of our great Creator and Preſerver is baniſhed, from many of the moſt *conſpicuous Families*; and it is deemed a Piece of rude Impertinence, ſo much as to mention the gracious Redeemer, in our *genteel Interviews:* when it paſſes for an elegant Freedom of Behaviour, to ridicule the Myſteries of Chriſtianity; and a Species of refined Converſation, to taint the Air with laſcivious Hints: when thoſe, who ſit in the *Scorner's Chair*, ſin with a high Hand: and many of thoſe, who wear the *Profeſſor's Garb*, are deſtitute of the Power, and content themſelves with the mere Form of Godlineſs: when ſuch is the State of a Community, there is Reaſon, too apparent Reaſon, to be horribly afraid. Such *Phænomena*, abounding in the moral World, are not fanciful, but real Omens. Will not an injured GOD "be avenged on ſuch a Nation as this?" Will he not be provoked, to "ſweep it with "the Beſom of Deſtruction*?"

O!

* *Iſa.* xiv. 23. The eternal Sovereign, ſpeaking of *Babylon*, denounces this Threatening, *I will ſweep it with the Beſom of Deſtruction.*—What a noble but dreadful

O! THAT the Inhabitants of *Great Britain*, would lay theſe alarming Conſiderations to Heart! The LORD of Hoſts has commanded the Sword of *civil Diſcord*, to return into its Sheath. But have we returned, every one from his *evil Ways?* Are we become a renewed People; devoted to a dying Saviour; and zealous of good Works?—What mean thoſe Peals of Sobs, which burſt from the *expiring Cattle?* What mean thoſe melancholy Moans, where the luſty Droves were wont to low * ? What mean thoſe Arrows of untimely Death, diſcharged on our innocent and uſeful Animals?

NO Wantonneſs or Sloth, has vitiated the Blood of theſe laborious, temperate Creatures. They have contracted no Diſeaſe, from unſeaſonable Indulgencies, and inordinate Revelings. The pure Stream is their Drink; the ſimple

ful Image, is here! How ſtrongly and awfully pourtrayed! How pregnant alſo in its Signification! Intimating the *vile Nature*, and expreſſing the *total Extirpation*, of this wicked People; at the ſame Time, ſuggeſting the *perfect Eaſe*, with which the righteous GOD would execute his intended Vengeance.

* If theſe Papers ſhould be ſo happy as to outlive their Author; perhaps, it may be needful to inform Poſterity, that the above-mentioned Hints, allude to a moſt terrible, contagious, and mortal *Diſtemper*; raging among the *horned Cattle*, in various Parts of the Kingdom.

ſimple Herb their Repaſt. Neither Care diſturbs their Sleep, nor Paſſion inflames their Breaſt. Whence then are they viſited with ſuch terrible Diſorders, as no Prudence can prevent, nor any Medicines heal?—Surely, theſe Calamities are the Weapons of Divine Diſpleaſure, and manifeſt Chaſtiſements of an evil Generation *. Surely GOD, the "GOD to "whom Vengeance belongeth," has ſtill a Controverſy with our ſinful Land. And who can tell, where the Viſitation will end? What a Storm may follow theſe preluſive Drops?—O! that we may "hear the Rod, and who "hath appointed it!" Taught by theſe *penal Effects* of our Diſobedience, may we remove the *accurſed Thing* †, from our Tents; our Practices; our Hearts! May we turn from all Ungodlineſs, before Wrath come upon us to the uttermoſt; before Iniquity prove our Ruin!

SOMETIMES, at this Hour, another moſt remarkable Sight amuſes the Curious, and alarms the Vulgar. A Blaze of lambent Meteors



* Hinc *lætis vituli vulgo moriuntur in herbis,*
*Et dulces animas plena ad præſepia reddunt.*
*Balatu* hinc *pecorum, & crebris mugitibus amnes,*
*Arenteſque ſonant ripæ, colleſque ſupini.* VIRG.

† Joſh. vi. 18.

is kindled, or ſome very extraordinary *Lights* are refracted, *in the* Quarters of the *North*.—— The Streams of Radiance, like Legions ruſhing to the Engagement, meet and mingle; inſomuch, that the Air ſeems to be all conflicting Fire. Within a while they ſtart from one another; and, like Legions in precipitate Flight, ſweep, each a ſeparate Way, through the Firmament. Now, they are quieſcent; anon, they are thrown into a quivering Motion; preſently, the whole Horizon is illuminated with the glancing Flames. Sometimes, with an Aſpect *awfully ludicrous*, they repreſent extravagant and antic Vagaries. At other Times, you would ſuſpect, that ſome inviſible Hand was playing off the dumb *Artillery* of the *Skies*; and, by a ſtrange Expedient, giving us the Flaſh, without the Roar.

The Villagers gaze at the Spectacle, firſt with Wonder, then with Horror. A general *Panic* ſeizes the Country. Every Heart throbs, and every Face is pale. The Crouds that flock together, inſtead of diminiſhing, increaſe the Dread. They catch Contagion, from each other's Looks and Words; while Fear is in every Eye, and every Tongue ſpeaks the Language of Terror. Some ſee *hideous Shapes*; Armies mixing in fierce Encounter, or Fields ſwim-

ſwimming with Blood. Some foreſee *direful Events*; States overthrown, or mighty Monarchs tottering on their Thrones. Others, ſcared with ſtill more frightful Apprehenſions, think of nothing but the *Day* of *Doom*. "Sure, "ſays one, the unalterable Hour is ſtruck, and "the End of all Things come.—See, replies "another, how the blaſted Stars look wan! "Are not theſe the Signs of the Son of Man, "coming in the Clouds of Heaven?—JESUS "prepare us (cries a Third, and lifts his Eyes "in Devotion) for the Archangel's Trump, and "the great Tribunal!"

IF this *waving Brightneſs*, which plays innocently over our Heads, be ſo amazing to Multitudes; what inexpreſſible Conſternation muſt overwhelm unthinking Mortals, when the *general Conflagration* commences! The Day, the dreadful Day, is approaching; "*In the which the* "*Heavens ſhall paſs away with a great Noiſe**, "*and*

* 2 *Pet.* iii. 10. I have often thought this Verſe an eminent Inſtance of that Kind of beautiful Writing, in which the very *Sound* bears a Sort of *Significancy*; at leaſt, carries an exact Correſpondence with the Senſe. The original Expreſſion—ροιζηδον—is one of the hoarſeſt and deepeſt Words in Language. Nothing could be more exquiſitely adapted to affect the *Ear*, as well as impreſs

" *and the Elements ſhall melt with fervent Heat*;
" *the Earth alſo, and all the Works that are*
" *therein, ſhall be burnt up.*" That mighty Hand, which once opened the Windows from on High, and broke up the Fountains of the great Deep, will then unlock all the *Magazines* of *Fire*, and pour a *Second Deluge* upon the Earth. The vengeful Flames, kindled by the Breath of the Almighty, ſpread themſelves from the Centre to the Circumference. Nothing can withſtand their Impetuoſity; nothing can eſcape their Rage. Univerſal Deſolation attends their Progreſs. Magnificent Palaces, and ſolemn Temples, are laid in Aſhes. Spacious Cities, and impregnable Towers, are mingled in one ſmoking Maſs. Not only the Productions of *human*

the *Imagination*, with the Wreck of Nature, and the Craſh of a falling World—I ſcarce ever read this Clauſe, but it brings to my Mind that admired Deſcription in MILTON:

—— On a ſudden open fly,
With impetuous Recoil, and *jarring Sound*,
Th' infernal Doors, and on their Hinges *grate*
*Harſh Thunder.*—— Book II. l. 879.

It is a pleaſing Employ, and a very laudable Office of true Criticiſm, to point out theſe inferior Recommendations of the *Sacred Claſſics*. Though, I believe, the inſpired Writers themſelves, amidſt all the Elevation and Magnificence of their Divine Ideas, diſdained a ſcrupulous Attention to ſuch *little Niceties* of Stile.

*human Art*, but the Works of *Almighty Power*, are Fuel for the devouring Element. The everlaſting Mountains melt, like the Snows which cover their Summit. Even vaſt Oceans, ſerve only to augment the inconceivable Rapidity and Fury of the Blaze.—O! how ſhall I, or others, ſtand undiſmayed amidſt the Glare of a *burning World*; unleſs the LORD JEHOVAH be our Defence? How ſhall we be upheld in Security, when the Globe itſelf is ſinking in a *fiery Ruin*; unleſs the Rock of Ages be our Support?

BEHOLD! a new Spectacle of Wonder! The *Moon* is making her Entry on the eaſtern Sky. See her riſing in clouded Majeſty! Opening, as it were, and aſſerting her original Commiſſion, to *rule over the Night*. All grand and ſtately, but ſomewhat ſullied is her Aſpect. However, ſhe *brightens*, as ſhe *advances*; and grows clearer, as ſhe climbs higher. Till, at length, her Silver loſes all its Droſs; ſhe unveils her peerleſs Light; and becomes "the Beauty of Heaven, "the Glory of the Stars *;" delighting every Eye, and chearing the whole World, with the Brightneſs of her Appearance, and the Softneſs



* Ecclus xliii. 9.
——— *Lucidum cæli decus.* HOR.

of her Splendors.—O! thou Queen of the Shades! may it be my Ambition, to follow this thy inſtructive example! While others are fond to tranſcribe the Faſhions of little Courts, and to mimic Perſonages of inferior State; be it mine, to imitate thy *improving Purity!* May my Conduct become more unblemiſhed, and my Temper more refined; as I proceed farther and farther, in my probationary Courſe! May every ſordid Deſire wear away, and every irregular Appetite be gradually loſt; as I make nearer Approaches, to the celeſtial Manſions!—Will not this be a comfortable Evidence, that I too ſhall ſhine, in my adored Redeemer's Kingdom? Shine, with a *richer* Luſtre, than that which radiates from thy reſplendent Orb: ſhine, with an *unfading* Luſtre, when every Ray, that beams from thy beauteous Sphere, is totally extinguiſhed?

The Day afforded us a Variety of entertaining Sights. Theſe were all withdrawn, at the Acceſſion of Darkneſs. The Stars, kindly officious, immediately lent us their Aid. This ſerved to *alleviate* the Frown of Night; rather than to *recover* the Objects from their Obſcurity. A faint Ray, ſcarcely reflected, and not from the intire Surface of Things, gave the ſtraining Eye

Eye a very imperfect Glimpſe; ſuch as rather mocked, than ſatisfied Viſion.—Now the Moon is riſen, and has collected all her Beams, the Veil is taken off from the Countenance of Nature. I ſee the recumbent Flocks; I ſee the green Hedge-Rows, though without the feathered Choriſters, hopping from Spray to Spray. In ſhort, I ſee once again the World's great Picture: not indeed in its late lively Colours, but more *delicately ſhaded*, and arrayed in *ſofter Charms* *.

WHAT a *majeſtic Scene* is here! Incomparably grand, and exquiſitely fine! — The Moon, like an immenſe cryſtal Lamp, pendent in the magnificent Cieling of the Heavens. The Stars, like ſo many Thouſands of golden Tapers, fixed in their azure Sockets. All pouring their Luſtre on ſpacious Cities, and lofty Mountains; glittering on the Ocean; gleaming on the Foreſt; and opening a Proſpect, wide as the Eye can glance, more various than Fancy can paint †.—We are forward to admire the Performances

† —— Now reigns
Full orb'd the Moon, and with more pleaſing Light
Shadowy ſets off the Face of Things.— MILT.

* *As when the Moon, refulgent Lamp of Night,*
*O'er Heav'n's clear Azure ſpreads her ſacred Light;*

formances of human Art. A Landſcape, elegantly deſigned, and executed with a maſterly Hand; a Piece of Statuary, which ſeems, amidſt all the Recommendations of exact Proportion, and graceful Attitude, to ſoften into Fleſh, and almoſt breathe with Life; theſe little *Imitations* of Nature, we behold with a pleaſing Surpriſe. And ſhall we be leſs affected, leſs delighted, with the inexpreſſibly noble, and completely finiſhed *Original!*—The ample Dimenſions of *Ranelagh*'s Dome; the gay Illuminations of *Vaux-Hall* Grove; I ſhould ſcorn to mention on ſuch an Occaſion, were they not the Objects of general Admiration. Shall we be charmed with thoſe puny Eſſays of finite Ingenuity;

*When not a Breath diſturbs the deep Serene,*
*And not a Cloud o'ercaſts the ſolemn Scene:*
*Around her Throne the vivid Planets roll,*
*And Stars unnumber'd gild the glowing Pole;*
*O'er the dark Trees a yellower Verdure ſhed,*
*And tip with Silver ev'ry Mountain's Head;*
*Then ſhine the Vales; the Rocks in Proſpect riſe;*
*A Flood of Glory burſts from all the Skies;*
*The conſcious Swains, rejoicing in the Sight,*
*Eye the blue Vault, and bleſs the uſeful Light.*

Iliad VIII.

I tranſcribe theſe Lines, becauſe Mr. *Pope* ſays, they exhibit, in the Original, the fineſt *Night-Piece* in Poetry. And, if they are ſo beautiful in *Homer*'s Language; who can ſuſpect their ſuffering any Diſadvantage, from the *Pen* of his admirable *Tranſlator?*

Ingenuity; and touched with no Tranſport, at this ſtupendous Diſplay of Omnipotent Skill? At the auguſt Grandeur, and ſhining Statelineſs, of the Firmament? which forms an Alcove for ten thouſand Worlds, and is ornamented with Myriads of everlaſting Luminaries. — Surely, this muſt betray, not only a total *Want* of *Religion*; but the moſt abject Littleneſs of Mind, and the utmoſt *Poverty* of *Genius*.

THE Moon, is not barely, "an *Ornament* "in the high Places of the LORD *;" but of ſignal *Service* to the Inhabitants of the Earth.— How uncomfortable is deep, pitchy, total Darkneſs! Eſpecially, in the long Abſence of the Winter's Sun. Welcome therefore, thrice welcome, this auſpicious Gift of Providence; to enliven the nocturnal Gloom, and line with Silver the raven-coloured Mantle of Night!— How deſirable to have our Summer-Evenings illuminated! That we may be able to tread the dewy Meads, and breathe the delicious Fragrance of our Gardens; eſpecially, when the ſultry Heats render it irkſome and fatiguing, to walk abroad by Day.—How chearing to the *Shepherd*, the Uſe of this univerſal Lantern; as He tends his fleecy Charge, or late conſigns them

* Eccluſ xliii. 9.

them to their hurdled Cots! How comfortable and how advantagious to the *Mariner*, as he ploughs the Midnight Main; to adjuſt the Tackling, to explore his Way, and, under the Influence of this beaming Sconce, to avoid the fatal Rock!—For theſe, and other beneficial Purpoſes, the Hand of the ALMIGHTY has hung the *ſtately Branch* on high; and filled it with a Splendor, not confined to a ſingle Edifice, or commenſurate to a particular Square, but diffuſive as the whole Extent of the Hemiſphere.

THE moſt faithful of our inferior Servants, are ſometimes tardy in their Office; ſometimes negligent of their Duty. But this celeſtial Attendant is moſt *exactly punctual*, at all the ſtated Periods of her Miniſtration. If we chooſe to prolong our Journey, after the Sun is gone down; the Moon, during her whole *Increaſe*, is always ready to act in the Capacity of a Guide. If we are inclined to ſet out very early in the Morning; the Moon, in her *Decreaſe* prevents the Dawn, on purpoſe, to offer her Aſſiſtance. And, becauſe it is ſo pleaſant a Thing, for the Eyes to behold the Light; the Moon, at her *Full*, by a Courſe of unintermitted Waiting, gives us, as it were, a double Day.—How apparently has the Divine Wiſdom intereſted

ereſted itſelf, in providing even for the *pleaſurable Accommodation* of Man! How deſirous, that He ſhould want no Piece of commodious Furniture; no Kind of delightful Convenience! And, in Proſecution of theſe benevolent Intentions, has annexed ſo valuable an Appendage to the terreſtrial Globe.—Juſtly, therefore, does the Pſalmiſt celebrate that admirable Conſtitution, which ordained *the Moon and the Stars to govern the Night*, as an Inſtance of rich Goodneſs *and of Mercy which endureth for ever* *.

THE Moon, it is confeſſed, is *no luminous* Body. All the Brightneſs, which beautifies her Countenance, is originally in the Sun, and no more than tranſmiſſively in her. That glorious Orb is the Parent of Day, and the Palace of Light. From thence, the Morning-Star gilds her Horn †; from thence, the Planetary Circles are crowned with Luſtre; and from thence, the Moon derives all her ſilver Radiance.—It is pleaſing

* Pſal. cxxxvi. 9.

† I might, to juſtify this Expreſſion, obſerve, that the Planet *Venus*, commonly called the Morning-Star, is found, by our Teleſcopes, frequently to appear *horned*; or to have a *Creſcent* of Light, ſomewhat like the Moon, a little before or after her Conjunction. But this would be a Remark, too deep and refined for my Scheme; which proceeds only upon a *ſuperficial* Knowledge, and the moſt *obvious* Appearances, of Nature.

pleaſing to reflect, that ſuch is the Caſe with the *all-ſufficient Redeemer*, and his *dependent People*. We are repleniſhed from his Fulneſs. What do we poſſeſs, which we have not received; and what can we deſire, which we may not expect; from that never-failing Source of all Good? He is the Author of our Faith, and the Former of our Graces. In his unſpotted Life, we ſee the Path; in his meritorious Death, the Price; and in his triumphant Reſurrection, the Proof of Bliſs and Immortality. If we offend, and fall Seven Times a Day; He is the LORD our *Peace* *. If we are depraved, and our beſt Deeds very unworthy; He is the LORD our *Righteouſneſs* †. If we are blind, and even brutiſh, in heavenly Knowledge; He is the LORD our *Wiſdom* ‡: his Word diſpels the Shades; his Spirit ſcatters the intellectual Gloom; his Eye looks our Darkneſs into Day. In ſhort, we are nothing, and "CHRIST is all." Worſe than defective in ourſelves, "we are *complete* in Him." So that if we ſhine, it is with delegated Rays, and with borrowed Light. We act by a Strength, and glory in Merits, not our own.—O! may we be thoroughly ſenſible of our Dependence on the Saviour! May we conſtantly imbibe his pro-

* Judg. vi. 23. † Jer. xxiii. 6. ‡ 1 Cor. i. 30.

propitious Beams; and never, by indulging *Unbelief*, or backſliding into *Folly*, withdraw our Souls from his benign Influences! Leſt we loſe our Comfort, and our Holineſs; as the fair Ruler of the Night loſes her Splendor, when her Urn is turned from its Fountain*, and receives no more Communications of ſolar Effulgence.

THE Moon is inceſſantly *varying*, either in her Aſpect, or her Stages.—Sometimes, ſhe looks full upon us, and her Viſage is all Luſtre. Sometimes, ſhe appears in Profile, and ſhews us only half her enlightened Face. Anon, a radiant Creſcent but juſt adorns her Brow. Soon, it dwindles into a ſlender Streak. Till, at length, all her Beauty vaniſhes, and ſhe becomes a beamleſs Orb.—Sometimes, ſhe riſes with the *deſcending Day*; and begins her Proceſſion, amidſt admiring Multitudes. Ere long, ſhe defers her Progreſs till the *midnight Watches*; and ſteals unobſerved, upon the ſleeping World.—Sometimes, ſhe juſt enters the Edges of the Weſtern *Horizon*, and drops us a ceremonious Viſit.

* Alluding to thoſe truly poetical Lines in *Milton*,

*Hither, as to their Fountain, other Stars*
*Repairing, in their golden Urns draw Light.*

*Par. Loſt*, B. VII. l. 364.

Viſit. Within a while, ſhe ſets out on her nightly Tour, from the oppoſite Regions of the Eaſt; traverſes the whole *Hemiſphere*; and never offers to withdraw, till the more refulgent Partner of her Sway renders her Preſence unneceſſary.—In a Word; ſhe is, while converſant among us, ſtill waxing or waning, and "never continueth in one Stay."

SUCH is the Moon; and ſuch are all *ſublunary Things*; expoſed to perpetual Viciſſitudes. —How often, and how ſoon, have the faint Echoes of *Renown* ſlept in Silence, or been converted into the Clamours of Obloquy! The ſame Lips, almoſt with the ſame Breath, cry Hoſanna, and Crucify.—Have not *Riches* confeſſed their notorious Treachery, a Thouſand and a Thouſand Times? Either melting away, like Snow in our Hands, by inſenſible Degrees; or eſcaping, like a winged Priſoner from its Cage, with a precipitate Flight.—Have we not known the Bridegroom's *Cloſet*, an Antechamber to the *Tomb*; and heard the Voice, which ſo lately pronounced the ſparkling Pair Huſband and Wife, proclaim an everlaſting Divorce; and ſeal the Decree with that ſolemn Aſſeveration, "Aſhes to Aſhes, Duſt to Duſt?"—Our *Friends*, though the Medicine of Life; our *Health*, though the Balm of Nature; are a

moſt

moſt precarious Poſſeſſion. How ſoon may the firſt become a Corpſe in our Arms; and how eaſily is the laſt deſtroyed in its Vigour!—You have ſeen, no doubt, a Set of pretty *painted Birds*, perching on your Trees, or ſporting in your Meadows. You was pleaſed with the lovely Viſitants, that brought Beauty on their Wings, and Melody in their Throats. But could you inſure the *Continuance* of this agreeable Entertainment? No, truly. At the leaſt diſturbing Noiſe, at the leaſt terrifying Appearance, they ſtart from their Seats; they mount the Skies; and are gone in an Inſtant, are gone for ever. Would you chooſe to have a Happineſs, which bears Date with their Arrival, and expires at their Departure? If you could not be content with a Portion, enjoyable only through ſuch a *fortuitous Term*, not of Years, but of Moments, O! take up with nothing earthly; ſet your Affections on Things above; there alone is "no Variableneſs or "Shadow of turning."

*JOB*, is not a more illuſtrious Pattern of Patience, than an eminent Exemplification of this Remark.—View him in his *private Eſtate*. He heaps up Silver as the Duſt; he waſhes his Steps in Butter, and the Rock pours him out Rivers of Oil.—View him in his *public Character*.

*racter.* Princes revere his Dignity; the Aged liſten to his Wiſdom; every Eye beholds him with Delight; every Tongue loads him with Bleſſings.—View him in his *domeſtic Circumſtances.* On one hand, he is defended by a Troop of Sons; on the other, adorned with a Train of Daughters; and on all Sides, ſurrounded by " a very great Houſehold."—Never was human Felicity ſo conſummate; never was *diſaſtrous Revolution* ſo ſudden. The Lightning, which conſumed his Cattle, was not more terrible, and ſcarce more inſtantaneous. The joyful Parent is bereft of his Offſpring, and his " Children are buried in " Death." The Man of Affluence is ſtript of his Abundance; and he, who was cloathed in Scarlet, embraces the Dung-hill. The venerable Patriarch is the Deriſion of Scoundrels; and the late Darling of an indulgent Providence, is become " a Brother to Dragons, a Compa- " nion of Owls."—Nor need we go back to former Ages, for Proofs of this afflicting Truth. In our Times; in all Times; the Wheel continues the ſame inceſſant Whirl. And frequently thoſe, who are triumphing, To-day, in the higheſt *Elevations* of Joy; To-morrow, are bemoaning the Inſtability of mortal Affairs, in the

the very *Depths* of Miſery *.—Amidſt ſo much Fluctuation and Uncertainty; how wretched is the Condition, which has no Anchor of the Soul, ſure and ſtedfaſt. May thy Loving-kindneſs, O GOD, be our preſent Treaſure; and thy future Glory, our reverſionary Inheritance! Then ſhall our Happineſs, not be like the full-orbed Moon, which is "a Light that "*decreaſeth* in its Perfection;" but like the Sun, when he goeth forth in his Strength, and



* I believe, I may venture to apply, what the *Temanite* ſays of the Affairs of the Wicked, to all ſublunary Things; as a true Deſcription of their very *great Inſtability*. *Job* xxii. 16. נהר יצק יסודם rendered by *Schultens*, *Flumen fuſum fundamentum eorum. Their Foundation* (or what they reckon their moſt ſolid and ſtable Poſſeſſion) *is a Flood poured out*.—Which is one of the boldeſt Images, and moſt poetical Beauties, I ever met with in any Language, ſacred or profane. In order to have a tolerable Conception of the Image, and a Taſte of it's Beauty; you muſt ſuppoſe a *Torrent* of Waters, ruſhing in broken Cataracts, and with impetuous Rapidity, from a ſteep and raggy Mountain. Then, imagine to yourſelf an *Edifice*, built upon the Surge of this rolling Precipice; which has no other Baſis, than one of thoſe headlong *whirling Waves*. Was there ever ſuch a Repreſentation of tranſitory Proſperity, tending, with inconceivable Swiftneſs, into Ruin? Yet ſuch is every Form of human Felicity, that is not grounded on JESUS, and a Participation of his Merits, who is the *Rock of Ages*; on JESUS, and his Image formed in our Hearts, which is the *Hope of Glory*.

knoweth no other Change, but that of *ſhining more* and more unto the perfect Day.

METHINKS, in this ever-varying Sphere, I ſee a Repreſentation, not only of our temporal Advantages, but alſo of our *ſpiritual Accompliſhments*. Such, I am ſure, is what the kind Partiality of a Friend would call *my Righteouſneſs*: And ſuch, I am apt to ſuſpect *, is the Righteouſneſs

* I would not be underſtood, as meaſuring, in this Reſpect, *others* by *myſelf*; but as taking my Eſtimate, from the unerring Standard of Scripture. And indeed, proceeding on this Evidence, ſupported by this Authority, I might have ventured farther than a bare *Suſpicion*. For, "there is not a *juſt* Man upon Earth, that doeth Good, "and *ſinneth not*;" ſays the Spirit of Inſpiration by *Solomon* (*Eccleſ.* vii. 20.)—Nay, ſuch is the Purity, and ſo extenſive are the Demands of the Divine Law, that an Apoſtle makes a ſtill more humbling Acknowledgment; "In *many* Things we offend *All*." (*Jam.* iii. 2.)—And the unerring Teacher, who moſt thoroughly knew our Frame, directs the moſt advanced, moſt eſtabliſhed, and moſt watchful Chriſtians, to pray daily for the Forgiveneſs of their *daily Treſpaſſes*.—To which Teſtimonies, I beg Leave to add an elegant Paſſage from the *Canticles*; becauſe, it not only expreſſes the Sentiment of this Paragraph, but illuſtrates it by the very ſame Similitude. *She* (the Church) *is fair as the Moon; clear as the Sun*. Fair as the Moon, the leſſer and changeable Light, in her *Sanctification*: Clear as the Sun, the greater and invariable Luminary, in her *Juſtification*. The inhererent Holineſs

teouſneſs of every Man living. Now we exerciſe it, in ſome few Inſtances; in ſome little Degrees. Anon, Sin revives, and leads our Souls into a tranſient, though unwilling Captivity. Now we are *meek*; but ſoon a ruffling Accident intervenes, and turns our Compoſure into a fretful Diſquietude. Now we are *humble*; ſoon we reflect upon ſome inconſiderable or imaginary Superiority over others, and a ſudden Elatement ſwells our Minds. Now, perhaps, we poſſeſs a clean Heart, and are warm with holy Love. But O! how eaſily is the Purity of our Affections ſullied; how ſoon the Fervour of our Gratitude cooled! And is there not ſomething amiſs, even in our beſt Moments? Something to be *aſhamed* of, in all we *are*; ſomething to be *repented* of, in all we *do*?

WITH what Gladneſs, therefore, and adoreing Thankfulneſs, ſhould we "ſubmit to the "Righteouſneſs of our incarnate GOD;" and *receive*, as a Divine Gift, what cannot be *acquired* by Human Works*!—A Writer, of the firſt Diſtinction, and niceſt Diſcernment, ſtiles the Obedience of our glorious Surety, an *everlaſting*



lineſs of Believers being imperfect, and ſubject to many Inequalities; while their imputed Righteouſneſs is every Way complete, and conſtantly like itſelf. *Cant.* vi. 10.

* Rom. v. 17.—x. 3.

*Righteouſneſs* *. Such as was ſubject to no Interruption, nor obſcured by the leaſt Blemiſh; but proceeded always in the ſame uniform Tenour, of the moſt ſpotleſs Perfection.—This Righteouſneſs, in another Senſe, anſwers the Prophet's exalted Deſcription; as its beneficial and ſovereign Efficacy knows no End; but laſts through all our Life; laſts in the trying Hour of Death; laſts at the deciſive Day of Judgment; laſts through every Generation; and will laſt to all Eternity.

Sometimes, I have ſeen that reſplendent Globe *ſtript* of her *Radiance*; or, according to the emphatical Language of Scripture, "turned "into Blood." The Earth, interpoſing with its opake Body, intercepted the ſolar Rays, and caſt its own gloomy Shadow on the Moon. The malignant Influence gained upon her ſickening Orb; extinguiſhed, more and more, the feeble Remainders of Light; till at length, like one in a *deep Swoon*, no Comelineſs was left in her Countenance; ſhe was totally overſpread with Darkneſs.—At this Juncture, what a Multitude of Eyes were gazing upon the rueful Spectacle! Even of thoſe Eyes, which diſregarded the Empreſs of the Night; or beheld her

* Dan. ix. 24.

ıer with Indifference; when, robed in Glory, .nd riding in her triumphal Chariot, ſhe ſhed a ofter Day through the Nations. But now, ınder theſe Circumſtances of Diſgrace, they vatch her Motions with the moſt *prying Attenion.* In every Place, her Misfortune is the Object of general Obſervation; and the prevailing Topic of Diſcourſe, in every Company.

Is it not thus, with regard to *Perſons* of *Eminence*, in their reſpective Spheres! Kings, at the Head of their Subjects; Nobles, ſurrounded with their Dependents; and (after Names of ſo much Grandeur, may I be allowed to add?) Miniſters, labouring among their People *; are each in a conſpicuous Station. Their Conduct in its *minuteſt* Step, eſpecially in any *Miſcarriage*, will be narrowly ſurveyed, and critically ſcanned. Can there be a louder Call, to ponder the Paths of their Feet, and to be particularly jealous over all their Ways?—Thoſe, who move in inferior Life, may groſsly offend; and little Alarm be given; perhaps, no Notice taken. But it is not to be expected, that the leaſt Slip in their Carriage, the leaſt Flaw in their Character, will paſs undiſcovered. *Malice*, with her Eagle-Eyes, will be ſure to diſcern them;



* *Ye are the Light of the World. A City that is ſet on an Hill, cannot be hid.* Matth. v. 14.

while *Cenſure*, with her ſhrill Trumpet, will be as far from concealing them; as *Calumny*, with her treacherous Whiſpers, from extenuating them. A Planet may ſink below the Horizon; or a Star, for ſeveral Months, withdraw its Shining; and ſcarce one in ten Thouſand perceive the Loſs. But, if the Moon ſuffers a tranſient Eclipſe, almoſt half the World are Spectators of her Diſhonour.

VERY different was the Caſe, when, at this late Hour, I have taken a ſolitary Walk on the *Weſtern Cliffs*. At the Foot of the ſteep Mountain, the Sea, all clear and ſmooth, ſpread itſelf into an immenſe Plain, and held a watry Mirror to the Skies. Infinite Heights above, the Firmament ſtretched its azure Expanſe; beſpangled with unnumbered Stars, and adorned with the Moon, "walking in Brightneſs *." She ſeemed to contemplate herſelf, with a peculiar Pleaſure; while the *tranſparent Surface*, both received, and returned her *ſilver Image*. Here, inſtead of being covered with Sack-cloth, ſhe ſhone with double Luſtre; or rather, with a Luſtre multiplied, in Proportion to the Number of Beholders, and their various Situations.

SUCH, methinks, is the Effect of an exemplary Behaviour, in Perſons of exalted Rank. Their

* Job xxxi. 26.

Their Courſe, as it is nobly diſtinguiſhed, ſo it will be happily *influential.* Others will catch the diffuſive Ray; and be ambitious to reſemble a Pattern, ſo attracting; ſo commanding. Their amiable Qualities, will not terminate in themſelves: but we ſhall ſee them *reflected* from their Families; their Acquaintance; their Retainers. Juſt as we may now behold another Moon; trembling * in the Stream; glittering in the Canal; and diſplaying its lovely Impreſs, on every Collection of Waters.

THE Moon, Philoſophy ſays, is a Sort of *Sovereign* over the *great Deep.* Her Orb, like a Royal Sceptre, ſways the Ocean, and actuates the fluid Realms. It ſwells the Tides, and perpetuates the reciprocal Returns of Ebb and Flow. By which Means, the liquid Element purges off its Filth; and is preſerved, from being putrefied itſelf, and from poiſoning the World.—Is the Moon thus *operative* on the vaſt Abyſs? And ſhall not the Faith of eternal and infinite Delights to come, be equally efficacious on this Soul of mine?—Far above her argent Fields, are Treaſures of *Happineſs*, unſeen by mortal Eye; by mortal Ear unheard; and unconceived by any human Imagination. In that



* *Splendet tremulo ſub Lumine Pontus.* VIRG.

deſirable World, the moſt diſtinguiſhed and exalted *Honours* alſo are conferred; in Compariſon with which, the Thrones and Diadems of earthly Monarchs, are empty Pageants, and childiſh Toys.—Yonder Arch of Sapphire, with all its Spangles of Gold, is but the Floor of thoſe Divine Abodes. What then are the Apartments; what is the Palace? How bright with Glories; how rich with Bliſs?

O! ye Manſions of Bleſſedneſs; ye Beauties of my Father's Kingdom; which far outſhine theſe Lamps of the viſible Heaven; tranſmit your ſweet and winning Invitations to my Heart. *Attract* and *refine*, all my Affections. Withdraw them from *ſtagnating*, on the ſordid Shores of Fleſh; never ſuffer them to ſettle, upon the impure Lees of Senſe: but impreſs them with *Emotions* of reſtleſs Deſire, after ſublime and celeſtial Joys.—Joys, that will proceed, ſtill proceed in a copious and everlaſting Flow, when Seas ſhall ceaſe to roll:—Joys, that will charm every Faculty with unimaginable Pleaſure; when the Moon, with her waxing Splendors, ſhall chear our Sight no more.

Enough for the preſent Evening. My Thoughts have been ſufficiently exerciſed, and my Steps begin to be attended with Wearineſs. Let me obey the Admonition of Nature; and give

give Reſpite to my Meditations, Slumber to my Eyes.—But ſtay.—Shall I retire to the Bed of Sleep, with as little Ceremony, and with as much Inattention, as the Brutes to their ſordid Lair? Are no *Acknowledgments* due to that Divine Being, who is the Support of my Life, and the Length of my Days? Have I no farther Need of his *protecting* Care; no more Occaſion for the Bleſſings of his Goodneſs?—*Lepidus*, perhaps, may laugh at the bended Knee; and have a thouſand Darts of Raillery, ready to diſcharge on the Practice of Devotion. The Wits I know are unmercifully ſevere on, what *they* call, the Drudgery of Prayer, and the fantaſtical Rant of Praiſe. Theſe they leave to the illiterate Labourer, and the mean Mechanic; or treat them, with a contemptuous Sneer, as the Parſon's ignoble Trade.

Is it then an Inſtance of *ſuperſtitious* Blindneſs, to diſtinguiſh; or of *whimſical* Zeal, to celebrate; the moſt ſupereminent Excellency and Merit? Is it an *ungraceful* Buſineſs; or does it argue a *groveling* Diſpoſition; to magnify Goodneſs, tranſcendently rich and diffuſive?—What can be ſo truly becoming a *dependent State*, as to pay our adoring Homage, to the Author of all Perfection; and profeſs our devoted Allegiance, to the ſupreme almighty Governor of the Univerſe?—

Univerſe?—Can any thing more ſignificantly beſpeak an *ingenuous Temper*; or adminiſter a more real Satisfaction to its fineſt Feelings; than the Exerciſes of penitential Devotion? By which we give Vent to an honeſt Anguiſh; or melt into filial Sorrow; for our Inſenſibility to the beſt of Friends, for our Diſobedience to the beſt of Parents?—In a Word; can there be a more *ſublime Pleaſure*, than to dwell, in fixed Contemplation, on the Beauties of the Eternal Mind; the amiable Original of all that is fair, grand, and harmonious; the beneficent Giver of all that is convenient, comfortable, and uſeful?—Can there be a more *advantageous Employ*, than to preſent our Requeſts to the Father of Mercies; opening our Minds to the Irradiations of his Wiſdom, and all the Faculties of our Souls to the Communications of his Grace?—It is ſtrange, unaccountably ſtrange, that the Notion of *Dignity* in Sentiment, and the Purſuit of *refined* Enjoyment, ſhould ever be diſunited from Devotion. That Perſons, who make Pretenſions to an improved Taſte, and exalted Genius, ſhould neglect this moſt ennobling Intercourſe, with the wiſeſt and beſt of Beings; the inexhauſtible Source of Honour and Joy.

SHALL

SHALL I be deterred, from approaching this Source of the pureſt Delight? Deterred, from purſuing this higheſt Improvement of my Nature? Deterred from all, by a *formidable* Banter; or confuted, by one *irrefragible* Smile?—No: let the Moon, in her reſplendent Sphere; and yonder Pole, with all its ſtarry Train; witneſs, if I be ſilent Even or Morn. If I refrain to kindle in my Heart and breathe from my Lips, the reaſonable Incenſe of Praiſe. Praiſe to that great and glorious GOD, who formed the Earth, and built the Skies; who poured from his Hand the watery World, and ſhed the all-ſurrounding Air abroad.—"Thou alſo "madeſt the Night, Maker Omnipotent! and "Thou, the Day! Which I, though leſs than "the leaſt of all thy Mercies, have paſſed in "Safety, Tranquility, and Comfort.—When "I was loſt in the Extravagance of Dreams, or "lay immerſed in the Inſenſibility of Sleep; "thy Hand recovered me from the temporary "Lethargy. Thy Hand ſet a new, a delicately "fine Edge, on all my blunted *Senſes*; and ſtrung "my Sinews with recruited Vigour. When my "Thoughts were benumbed and ſtupefied, thy "quickening Influence rouſed them into Activity; when they were diſconcerted and "wild, thy regulating Influence reduced them

"into

" into Order. Refitting me at once, to reliſh
" the innocent Entertainments of an *animal*,
" and to enjoy the ſublime Gratifications of a
" *rational* Capacity.—When Darkneſs covered
" the Creation, at thy Command, the *Sun* aroſe;
" painted the Flowers, and diſtinguiſhed every
" Object; gave Light to my Feet, and gave
" Nature, with all her beautiful Scenes, to
" my Eye.—To Thee, O Thou GOD of my
" Strength, I owe the *Continuance* of my Be-
" ing, and the *Vivacity* of my Conſtitution.
" By thy ſacred Order, without any Conſciouſ-
" neſs of mine, the Wheels of Life move, and
" the crimſon Fountain plays. *Over-ruled* by
" thy exquiſite *Skill*, it transforms itſelf, by
" the niceſt Operations of an inexplicable kind
" of Chemiſtry, into a Variety of the fineſt
" Secretions. Which glide into the Muſcles,
" and ſwell them for Action; or pour them-
" ſelves into the Fluids, and repair their in-
" ceſſant Decays. Which cauſe Chearfulneſs
" to ſparkle in the Eye, and Health to bloom
" in the Cheek.

" *DISASTROUS Accidents*, injurious to
" the Peace of my Mind; or fatal to the Wel-
" fare of my Body; beſet my Paths. But thy
" Faithfulneſs and Truth, like an impenetrable
" Shield, guarded me all around. Under this

" Divine

" Divine Protection, I walked ſecure, amidſt " Legions of *apparent* Perils; and paſſed un- " hurt, through a far greater Multipicity of " *unſeen* Evils. Not one of my Bones was " broken; not a ſingle Shaft grazed upon my " Eaſe; even when the Eye that watched over " me, ſaw, in its wide Survey, *Thouſands falling* " *beſide me*, in irrecoverable Ruin; *and ten* " *Thouſands* deeply wounded, *on my Right-hand.* " —If Sickneſs has, at any Time, ſaddened my " Chamber, or Pain harrowed my Fleſh; it " was a *wholſome* Diſcipline, and a *gracious* " Severity. The Chaſtiſement proved a ſo- " vereign Medicine, to cure me of an immo- " derate Fondneſs, for this imperfect trouble- " ſome State; and to quicken my Deſires, after " the unimbittered Enjoyments of my eternal " Home.—Has not thy Munificence, unwear- " ried and unbounded, ſpread my *Table*; and " furniſhed it, with the fineſt Wheat; reple- " niſhed it, with Marrow and Fatneſs? While " Temperance ſweetened the Bowl; Appetite " ſeaſoned the Diſh; Contentment and Grati- " tude crowned the Repaſt.—Has not thy " Kindneſs, O GOD of the Families of *Iſrael*, " preſerved my affectionate *Relations*; who " ſtudy, by their tender Offices, to ſoften every " Care, and heighten every Joy? Has not

" thy

" thy Kindneſs given me valuable *Friends*;
" whoſe Preſence is a Cordial, to chear me in
" a dejected Hour; and whoſe Converſation,
" mingles Improvement with Delight?

" WHEN Sin lay diſguiſed amidſt flowery
" Scenes of Pleaſure; enlightened by thy Wiſ-
" dom, I *diſcerned* the latent Miſchief; made
" reſolute by thy Grace, I *ſhunned* the luſcious
" Bane. If, through the Impulſe of Senſuality,
" or the Violence of Paſſion, I have been hur-
" ried into the Snare, and ſtung by the Ser-
" pent; thy faithful Admonitions, have *recalled*
" the fooliſh Wanderer; while the Blood of thy
" Son, has *healed* his deadly Wounds.—Some,
" no Doubt, have been cut off in the Midſt of
" their Iniquities; and tranſmitted, from the
" Thrillings of polluted Joy, to the Agonies of
" eternal Deſpair. Whereas, I have been diſ-
" tinguiſhed by long-ſuffering Mercy; and, in-
" ſtead of lifting up my Eyes in Torments, to
" behold a Heaven irrecoverably loſt; I may
" lift them up under the pleaſing Views of
" being admitted, ere long, into thoſe Abodes
" of endleſs Felicity.—In the mean Time,
" Thou haſt vouchſafed me the *Revelation* of
" thy Will; the Influences of thy *Spirit*; and
" Abundance of the moſt effectual *Aids*, for
" advancing in Knowledge, and growing in
Godli-

" Godlineſs: for becoming more conformable
" to thy Image, and more meet for thy Pre-
" ſence: for taſting the Pleaſures of Religion,
" and ſecuring the Riches of Eternity.

" How various is thy Beneficence, O Thou
" Lover of Souls! It has unſealed a thouſand
" Sources of Good; opened a thouſand Avenues
" of Delight; and heaped Bleſſings upon me,
" with a ceaſeleſs Liberality. If I ſhould at-
" tempt to declare them; they would be more
" than the *ſtarry* Hoſt, which glitter in this un-
" clouded Sky; more than the *dewy* Gems,
" which will adorn the Face of the Morning.

" And ſhall I *forget* the GOD of my Salva-
" tion, the Author of all my Mercies? Rather
" let my Pulſe forget to beat!—Shall I render
" Him *no* Expreſſions of Thankfulneſs? Then
" might all Nature reproach my Ingratitude.—
" Shall I reſt ſatisfied with the *bare* Acknow-
" ledgment of my Lips? No: let my Life be
" vocal, and ſpeak his Praiſe, in that only
" genuine, that moſt emphatical Language—
" the Language of devout Obedience. Let the
" *Bill* be drawn upon my very Heart; let all
" my Affections *acknowledge* the Draught; and
" let the whole Tenour of my Actions, in Time
" and through Eternity, be continually *paying*

" the

" the Debt—the ever-pleaſing, ever-growing
" Debt of Duty, Veneration, and Love.
" AND can I, O Thou Guide of my Goings,
" and Guardian of all my Intereſts—can I *diſ-*
" *truſt* ſuch ſignal, ſuch experienced Goodneſs?
" *Thou haſt been my Helper*, thro' all the buſy
" Scenes of Day: *therefore, under the Shadow of*
" *thy Wings* will I repoſe myſelf, during the
" Darkneſs, the Danger, and Death-like In-
" activity of the Night. Whatever Defilement
" I have contracted, waſh it thoroughly away,
" in redeeming Blood; and let neither the ſin-
" ful Stain, nor the ſinful Inclination, accom-
" pany me to my Couch!—Then, ſhall *I lay*
" *me down in Peace, and take my Reſt*; chear-
" fully referring it to thy all-wiſe Determina-
" tion, whether I ſhall open my Eyes in *this*
" World, or awake in the unknown Regions
" of *another*."

*The* E N D.

# NTEMPLATIONS

## ON THE

# TARRY HEAVENS.

---

*·e dwells a* noble Pathos *in the Skies,*
*ch warms our Paſſions, proſelytes our Hearts.*
*)* eloquently ſhines *the glowing Pole!*
*h what Authority it gives its Charge,*
*onſtrating* great Truths *in Stile ſublime!*
Night-Thoughts, N° IX.

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*to*

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*N. B.* It may ſeem unaccountable to an *unlearned* Reader, that Aſtronomers ſhould ſpeak ſuch amazing Things; and ſpeak them with ſuch

ſuch an Air of *Aſſurance*; concerning the Diſtances and Magnitudes; the Motions and Relations, of the heavenly Bodies. I would deſire ſuch a Perſon to conſider the Caſe of ECLIPSES, and with what *Exactneſs* they are calculated. They are not only foretold, but the very Inſtant of their *Beginning* is determined. The preciſe Time of their *Continuance* is aſſigned; aſſigned, almoſt to the *Nicety* of a Moment; and what is ſtill more ſurpriſing, for the Space of *Hundreds* or *Thouſands* of Years to come.— As this is a Matter of Fact, abſolutely indiſputable; it is alſo a very obvious, yet ſolid Demonſtration, that the Principles of Science, on which thoſe Calculations proceed, are not mere Conjecture, or precarious Suppoſition; but have a *real*, a *certain* Foundation, in the Nature and Conſtitution of Things.

# CONTEMPLATIONS ON THE STARRY HEAVENS.

THIS Evening, I exchange the nice Retreats of Art, for the noble Theatre of Nature. Inſtead of meaſuring my Steps, under the *Covert* of an Arbour; let me range along the *Summit*, of this gently riſing Hill.—There is no Need of the leafy Shade, ſince the Sun has quitted the Horizon, and withdrawn his ſcorching Beams. But ſee, how Advantages and Inconveniencies are uſually linked, and chequer our Affairs below! If the *annoying Heat* ceaſes, the *Landſcape*, and its pleaſing Scenes, are alſo removed.—The majeſtic Caſtle, and the lowly Cottage, are vaniſhed together.

I have loſt the aſpiring Mountain, and its ruſſet Brow; I look round, but to no Purpoſe, for the humble Vale, and its flowery Lap. The Plains whitened with Flocks, and the Heath yellow with Furze, diſappear. The advancing Night has wrapt in Darkneſs the long extended Foreſt; and drawn her Mantle, over the Windings of the ſilver Stream. I no longer behold that luxuriant Fertility in the Fields; that wild Magnificence of Proſpect, and endleſs Variety of Images; which have ſo often touched me with Delight, and ſtruck me with Awe, from this commanding Eminence.

THE Loſs, however, is ſcarcely to be regretted; ſince it is amply compenſated, by the opening Beauties of the Sky. Here I enjoy a free View of the whole Hemiſphere; without any Obſtacle from below, to confine the exploring Eye; or any Cloud from above, to overcaſt the ſpacious Concave. 'Tis true; the lively Vermillion, which ſo lately ſtreaked the Chambers of the Weſt, is all faded. But the *Planets*, one after another, light up their Lamps; the *Stars* advance in their glittering Train; a Thouſand and a Thouſand Luminaries, ſhine forth in ſucceſſive Splendors; and the whole Firmament is kindling into the moſt beautiful Glow. The Blueneſs of the Æther, heightened by the Seaſon

Seaſon of the Year, and ſtill more enlivened by the *Abſence* of the *Moon*, gives thoſe Gems of Heaven the ſtrongeſt Luſtre.

ONE Pleaſure more, the invading Gloom has not been able to ſnatch, from my Senſe. The Night rather improves, than deſtroys, the Fragrance which exhales from the *blooming Beans*. With theſe, the Sides of the ſloping Declivity are lined; and with theſe, the balmy Zephyrs perfume their Wings. Does *Arabia*, from all her ſpicy Groves, breathe a more liberal, or a more charming Gale of Sweets? And, what is a peculiar Recommendation of the rural Entertainments, preſented in our happy Land, they are alloyed by no Apprehenſions of Danger. No poiſonous Serpent, lurks under the Bloſſom; nor any ravenous Beaſt, lies ready to ſtart from the Thicket.—But, I wander from a far more exalted Subject. My Thoughts, like my Affections, are too eaſily diverted from the Heavens, and detained by inferior Objects. Away, my Attention, from theſe little Blandiſhments of the Earth; ſince all the *Glories* of the *Sky* invite thy Regard.

WE have taken a Turn among the *Tombs*, and viewed the ſolemn Memorials of the Dead:

in order to learn the Vanity of mortal Things, and to break their ſoft Inchantment.—We have ſurveyed the *Ornaments* of the *Garden*; not that the Heart might be planted in the Parterre, or take Root among the flowery Race: but that theſe Delicacies of a Day, might teach us to aſpire after a better Paradiſe; where Beauty never fades, and Delight is ever in the Bloom.—A Third Time we lighted the Candle of Meditation; and ſought for Wiſdom, not in the crouded City, or wrangling Schools, but in the ſilent and lonely *Walks* of antient *Night**.—Let us once more indulge the contemplative Vein, and raiſe our Speculations to thoſe *ſublimer Works* of the great Creator; which the Regions of the Sky contain, and this duſky Hour unveils †.

If we have diſcerned the Touches of his Pencil, glowing in the Colours of Spring; if we have ſeen a Sample of his Beneficence, exhibited in the Stores of Nature; and a Ray of his Brightneſs, beaming in the Blaze of Day; what an

* Referring to the ſeveral Subjects of the Three preceding Eſſays.

† Night opes the *nobleſt Scenes*, and ſheds an Awe,
Which gives thoſe venerable Scenes full Weight,
And deep Reception in th' entender'd Heart.
*Night-Thoughts*, N° IX.

an infinitely richer Field for the Diſplay of his Perfections, are the Heavens! The *Heavens*, in the moſt emphatical Manner, declare the Glory of GOD. The Heavens are nobly eloquent of the Deity, and the moſt magnificent Heralds of their Maker's Praiſe. They ſpeak to the whole Univerſe; for there is neither Speech ſo *barbarous*, but their Language is underſtood; nor Nation ſo *diſtant*, but their Voices are heard among them *.—Let me then, in this ſolemn Seaſon, formed for Thought, and a calm Intercourſe with Heaven; let me liſten to their ſilent Lectures. Perhaps, I may receive ſuch impreſſive Manifeſtations of "the eternal Power "and Godhead," as may *ſhed Religion* on my Soul, while I walk the ſolitary Shades; and may be a tutelary *Friend* to my *Virtue*, when the Call of Buſineſs, and the Return of Light, expoſe me again to the Inroads of Temptation.

THE *Iſraelties*, inſtigated by Frenzy rather than Devotion, worſhipped the Hoſt of Heaven. And the Pretenders to *judicial Aſtrology* talk of, I know not what, myſterious Efficacy; in the different Aſpect of the Stars, or the various Conjunction and Oppoſition of the Planets.—Let thoſe, who are unacquainted with the ſure



* Pſal. xix. 3.

Word of Revelation, give ear to theſe Sons of Deluſion, and Dealers in Deceit. For my Part, it is a Queſtion of Indifference to me, whether the Conſtellations ſhone with Smiles, or loured in Frowns, on the Hour of my Nativity. Let CHRIST be my *Guard*; and, ſecure in ſuch a Protection, I would laugh at their impotent Menaces. Let CHRIST be my *Guide*; and I ſhall ſcorn to aſk, as well as deſpair of receiving, any predictory Information from ſuch ſenſeleſs Maſſes.—What! ſhall "the Living ſeek to the "Dead *?" Can theſe Bodies advertiſe me of future Events, which are unconſcious of their own Exiſtence? Shall I have Recourſe to dull unintelligent Matter, when I may apply to that all-wiſe Being; who, with one comprehenſive Glance, diſtinctly views whatever is lodged in the Boſom of Immenſity, or forming in the Womb of Futurity?—Never, never will I ſearch for any Intimations of my *Fate*; but often trace my Creator's *Footſteps* †, in yonder ſtarry Plains. In

* Iſa. viii. 19.

† "It is moſt becoming (ſays a great Author) ſuch "imperfect Creatures as we are, to contemplate the "Works of GOD, with *this* Deſign that we may diſcern "the Manifeſtations of Wiſdom in them; and thereby "excite in ourſelves thoſe devout Affections, and that ſu-"perlative Reſpect, which is the very Eſſence of Praiſe, "as

In the former Caſe, they would be Teachers of Lyes; in the latter, they are Oracles of Truth. In this therefore, this Senſe only, I profeſs myſelf the Pupil of the Stars.

THE Vulgar, are apprehenſive of nothing more, than a Multitude of *bright Spangles*, dropt over the æthereal Blue. They have no higher Notion of theſe fine Appearances, than that they are ſo many *golden Studs*, with which the Empyrean Arch is decorated.—But ſtudious Minds, that carry a more accurate and ſtrict Inquiry among the celeſtial Bodies, bring back Advices of a moſt aſtoniſhing Import. Let me



" as it is a reaſonable and moral Service." ABERNETHY *on the Attributes*.—And, indeed, if we are ſincerely diſpoſed to employ ourſelves in this excellent, this delightful Duty of praiſing the infinite Creator; the *Means*, and the *Motives*, are both at hand. His Works, in a wonderful and inſtructive Variety, preſent themſelves; with pregnant Manifeſtations of the moſt tranſcendent Excellencies of their Maker. They pour their Evidence from all Quarters, and into all the Avenues of the Mind. They invite us, eſpecially in the magnificent Syſtem of the Univerſe, to contemplate—*Counſel*, conſummately wiſe; and *Execution*, inimitably perfect:—*Power*, to which nothing is impoſſible; and *Goodneſs*, which extendeth to All, which endureth for ever.—To give, not a full Diſplay, but only ſome *ſlight Strictures*, of theſe glorious Truths, is the principal Scope of the following Remarks.

juſt recollect the moſt material of thoſe *ſtupendous Diſcoveries*; in order to furniſh out proper Subjects for Contemplation. And let the Unlearned remember, That the Scene I am going to diſplay, is the Workmanſhip of that incomprehenſible GOD, who is "perfect in Knowledge, "and mighty in Power." Whoſe Name, whoſe Nature, and all whoſe Operations, are "great "and marvellous." Who ſummons into Being, with equal Eaſe, a ſingle Grain, or ten thouſand Worlds.—To this if we continually advert, the Aſſertions, though they will certainly excite our *Admiration*, need not tranſcend our Belief.

THE Earth, is, in Fact, a round Body; however it may ſeem, in ſome Parts, to be ſunk into Vales, and raiſed into Hills*; in other Parts,

* A learned Writer, I think, Dr. *Derham*, has ſomewhere an Obſervation to this Purpoſe—That the loftieſt *Summits* of Hills, and the moſt enormous *Ridges* of Mountains, are no real Objection to the *globular* or round Form of the Earth. Becauſe, however they may render it, to our limited Sight, vaſtly uneven and protuberant; yet, they bear no more Proportion to the *intire* Surface of the terraqueous Ball, than a *Particle* of Duſt, caſually dropt on the Mathematician's Globe, bears to its whole Circumference. Conſequently, the rotund Figure is no more deſtroyed in the former Caſe, than in the latter.—

On

Parts, to be ſpread into a ſpacious Plain, extending to the Confines of the Heavens, or terminated by the Waters of the Ocean.—We may fanſy, that it has deep Foundations, and reſts upon ſome prodigiouſly ſolid Baſis. But it is *pendent*, in the wide tranſpicuous Æther; without any viſible Cauſe, to uphold it from above, or ſupport it from beneath.—It may ſeem to be ſedentary in its Attitude, and motionleſs in its Situation. But it is continually *ſailing* *, thro' the Depths of the Sky; and in the Space of Twelve Months, finiſhes the mighty Voyage. Which periodical Rotation, produces the Seaſons, and compleats the Year.—As it proceeds in the annual Circuit, it *ſpins* upon its own *Centre*; and turns its Sides, alternately to the Fountain of Light. By which means, the *Day* dawns in one Hemiſphere; while the Night ſucceeds in the other. Without this Expedient, one Part of its Regions would, during half the great Revolution, be ſcorched with

On the ſame Principle, I have not thought it neceſſary, to take any Notice of the comparatively ſmall Difference, between the *Polar* and *Equatorial* Diameter of the Earth.

* With what amazing *Speed*, this Veſſel (if I may carry on the Alluſion,) filled with a Multitude of Nations, and freighted with all their Poſſeſſions, makes her Way through the ethereal Space; ſee Page 155, in Note.

with exceſſive Heat, or languiſh under an unintermitted Glare: while the other, expoſed to the contrary Extremes, would be frozen to Ice, and buried under a long Oppreſſion of diſmal and deſtructive Darkneſs.

I CANNOT forbear taking notice; that, in this compound Motion of the Earth, the one never *interferes* with the other, but both are perfectly *compatible*. Is it not thus, with the Precepts of Religion, and the needful Affairs of the preſent Life; not excepting even the innocent Gratifications of our Appetites? — Some, I believe, are apt to imagine, that they muſt renounce Society, if they devote themſelves to CHRIST; and abandon all the Satisfactions of *this* World, if they once become zealous Candidates for the Felicity of *another*.— But this is a very miſtaken Notion, or elſe a very injurious Repreſentation, of the Doctrine which is according to Godlineſs. It was never intended to drive Men into Deſarts; but to lead them, through the peaceful and pleaſant Paths of Wiſdom, into the bliſsful Regions of Life eternal. It was never intended to ſtrike off the Wheels of Buſineſs, or cut in ſunder the Sinews of Induſtry; but rather, to make Men induſtrious from a Principle of *Conſcience*, not from the Inſtigations of *Avarice*; that ſo, they may

may promote their immortal Happineſs, even while they provide for their temporal Maintenance. It has no Deſign to extirpate our Paſſions, but only to reſtrain their Irregularities; neither would it extinguiſh the Delights of Senſe, but prevent them from evaporating into Vanity, and ſubſiding into Gall.—A Perſon may be chearful among his Friends, and yet joyful in GOD. He may taſte the Sweets of his earthly Eſtate; and, at the ſame Time, cheriſh his Hopes of a nobler Inheritance in Heaven. The *Trader* may proſecute the Demands of Commerce, without neglecting to negociate the Affairs of his Salvation. The *Warrior* may wear his Sword; may draw, in a juſt Cauſe, that murderous Weapon; yet be a good Soldier of JESUS CHRIST, and obtain the Crown that fadeth not away. The *Parent* may lay up a competent Portion for his Children, and not forfeit his Title to the Treaſures, either of Grace or of Glory.—So far is Chriſtianity, from obſtructing any valuable Intereſt, or with-holding any real Pleaſure; that it improves the one, and advances the other. Juſt as the diurnal and annual Motions, are ſo far from *claſhing*, that they intirely *accord*; and, inſtead of being deſtructive of each other, by mutually blending their Effects, they give Proportion

portion and Harmony to Time, Fertility and innumerable Benefits to Nature.

To Us, who dwell on its Surface, the Earth is by far the *moſt extenſive* Orb; that our Eyes can, any-where, behold. It is alſo cloathed with Verdure; diſtinguiſhed by Trees; and adorned with a Variety of beautiful Decorations. Whereas, to a Spectator placed on one of the Planets, it wears an uniform Aſpect; looks all luminous, and *no larger* than a Spot. To Beings, who dwell at ſtill greater Diſtances, it intirely diſappears.—That which we call, alternately, the Morning and the Evening-Star; as in one Part of her Orbit, ſhe rides foremoſt in the Proceſſion of Night; in the other, uſhers in and anticipates the Dawn; is a *planetary World.* Which, with the four others, that ſo wonderfully vary their myſtic Dance, are in themſelves dark Bodies, and ſhine only by Reflexion: have Fields, and Seas, and Skies, of their own: are furniſhed with all Accommodations for *animal* Subſiſtence, and are ſuppoſed to be the Abodes of *intellectual* Life. All which, together with this our earthly Habitation, are dependent on that grand Deſpenſer of divine Munificence, the Sun; receive their Light from the Diſtribution of his Rays, and derive their Comforts from his benign Agency.

THE

THE *Sun*, which ſeems to perform its daily Stages through the Sky, is, in this reſpect*, *fixed* and immoveable. 'Tis the great Axle of Heaven, about which the Globe we inhabit, and other more ſpacious Orbs, wheel their ſtated Courſes.—The Sun, though ſeemingly *ſmaller* than the *Dial* it illuminates, is abundantly *larger* † than this whole *Earth*; on which ſo many lofty Mountains riſe, and ſuch vaſt Oceans roll. A Line, extending from Side to Side, through the Centre of that reſplendent Orb, would meaſure more than eight hundred thouſand Miles: a Girdle, formed to go round its Circumference, would require a Length of Millions: were its ſolid Contents to be eſtimated, the Account would over-whelm our Underſtanding, and be almoſt beyond the Power of Language to expreſs ‡.—Are we ſtartled at theſe Reports

* I ſay, *in this reſpect*; that I may not ſeem to forget, or exclude, the Revolution of the Sun round its own Axis.

† A hundred thouſand Times, according to the *loweſt* Reckoning. Sir ISAAC NEWTON computes the Sun to be 900,000 Times bigger than the Earth. *Religious Philoſopher*, p. 749.

‡ Dr. DERHAM, after having calculated the Dimenſions of the Planets, adds; "Amazing as theſe Maſſes are, "they are all far outdone by that ſtupendous Globe of Light,

Reports of Philoſophy? Are we ready to cry out, in a Tranſport of Surprize? How *mighty* is the Being, who kindled ſuch a prodigious Fire; and keeps alive, from Age to Age, ſuch an enormous Maſs of Flame!—Let us attend our philoſophic Guides, and we ſhall be brought acquainted with Speculations, more inlarged and more amazing.

THIS Sun, with all its attendant Planets, is but a very little Part of the grand Machine of the Univerſe. Every *Star*, though, in Appearance, no bigger than the Diamond, that glitters upon a Lady's Ring; is really a *vaſt Globe*, like the Sun in Size, and in Glory; no leſs ſpacious, no leſs luminous, than the radiant Source of our Day. So that every Star is, not barely a World, but the *Centre* of a magnificent Syſtem; has a Retinue of Worlds, irradiated by its Beams, and revolving round its attractive Influence. All which are loſt, to our Sight, in unmeaſurable Wilds of Æther.—That the Stars appear like ſo many diminutive, and ſcarce diſtinguiſhable *Points*, is owing to their immenſe and inconceivable

" of Light, the Sun; which as it is the Fountain of Light " and Heat, to all the Planets about it, ſo doth it far " ſurpaſs them all in its Bulk: Its apparent Diameter " being computed at 822,148 *Engliſh* Miles, its Ambit " at 2,582,873 Miles, and its ſolid Contents at 290,971, " 000,000,000,000." *Aſtro. Theol.* Book. I. Chap. II.

ceivable Diſtance. Immenſe and inconceivable indeed it is; ſince a Ball, ſhot from the loaded Cannon, and flying with unabated Rapidity, muſt travel, at this impetuous Rate, almoſt ſeven hundred thouſand Years*, before it could reach the *neareſt* of thoſe twinkling Luminaries.

CAN any Thing be more wonderful, than theſe Obſervations? Yes: There are Truths, far more ſtupendous; there are Scenes, far more extenſive. As there is no End of the Almighty Maker's Greatneſs; ſo no Imagination can ſet Limits to his creating Hand.—Could you ſoar beyond the Moon, and paſs through all the planetary Choir: could you wing your Way to the higheſt apparent Star, and take your Stand on one of thoſe loftieſt Pinacles of Heaven: you would, there, ſee *other Skies* expanded; *another Sun*, diſtributing his inexhauſtible Beams by Day; *other Stars*, that gild the Horrors of the alternate Night: and *other*†, perhaps nobler *Syſtems*

* See *Religious Philoſopher*, p. 819.

† See *Aſtro Theology*, Book II. Chap. II.——— Where the Author, having aſſigned various Reaſons to ſupport this Theory of our *modern Aſtronomers*, adds—"Beſides the fore-mentioned ſtrong Probabilities, we "have this farther Recommendation of ſuch an Account "of the Univerſe, that it is far *more* magnificent and "worthy

*Syſtems*, eſtabliſhed; eſtabliſhed, in unknown Profuſion, through the boundleſs Dimenſions of Space.—Nor does the Dominion of the univerſal Sovereign terminate *there*. Even at the End of this vaſt Tour, you would find yourſelf advanced no farther, than the Suburbs of Creation; arrived only at the Frontiers of the great JEHOVAH's Kingdom*.

AND do they tell me; That the Sun, the Moon, and all the Planets, are but a little Part of HIS Works? *How great*, then, *are his Signs! And how mighty are his Wonders* †!—And if ſo, what

"worthy of the infinite *Creator*, than any other of the "narrower Schemes."

* *Job*, after a moſt beautiful Diſſertation, on the mighty Works of GOD; as they are diſtributed through univerſal Nature, from the Heights of Heaven, to the very Depths of Hell; cloſes the magnificent Account with this Acknowledgment; *Lo! theſe are Parts of his Ways*. Or, as the original Word more literally ſignifies; and may, I think, be more elegantly rendered; Theſe are only *the Skirts*, the very outermoſt Borders of his Works. No more than a ſmall Preface to the immenſe Volume of the Creation.—From the *Hebrew* קצה *Extremitates*, I cannot forbear thinking, on the extreme and very attenuated *Fibres* of the Root, when compared with the whole Subſtance of the *Trunk*; or on the exquiſitely ſmall Size of the *capillary* Veſſels, when compared with the whole Structure of the Body. *Job* xxvi. 14.

† Dan. iv. 3.

what is the CREATOR Himſelf! How far exalted above all Praiſe! Who is ſo *high*; that He looks down on the higheſt of theſe dazling Spheres, and ſees even the Summit of Creation in a Vale: ſo *great*, that this prodigious Extent of Space, is but a Point in his Preſence; and all this Confluence of Worlds, as the lighteſt Atom, that fluctuates in Air, and ſports in the meridian Ray*.



* This puts me in mind of a very fine Remark on a ſcriptural Beauty; and a ſolid Correction of the common Tranſlation; made by that learned, ſagacious, and devout Expoſitor *Vitringa*.—Iſa. xl. 15. We find it written of the Supreme Being, That *he taketh up the Iſles as a very little Thing*. Which, our Critic obſerves, is neither anſwerable to the Import of the Original, nor conſonant to the Structure of the Diſcourſe. The Prophet had no Intention to inform Mankind, what the Almighty could *do*, with regard to the Iſlands, if he pleaſed to exert uncontroulable Power. His Deſign was to ſhew, how inſignificant, or rather what mere Nothings *they are*, in his Eſteem, and before his Majeſty.—The Iſlands, ſays he, though ſo *ſpacious*, as to afford Room for the Erection of Kingdoms, and the Abode of Nations; though ſo *ſtrong*, as to withſtand, for many Thouſands of Years, the raging and reiterated Aſſaults of the whole watry World; are yet, before the adored JEHOVAH, *ſmall* as the minuteſt Grain, which the Eye can ſcarce diſcern; *light* as the feathered Mote, which the leaſt Breath hurries away like a Tempeſt.—איים כדק יטול *Inſulæ ſunt ut leve quid, quod avolat. The* deep-rooted *Iſlands are as the volatile Atom, which*, by the gentleſt Undulations of the Air, *is wafted to and fro in perpetual Agitation.*

THOU moſt ſublime and incomprehenſibly glorious GOD, how am I overwhelmed with Awe! How ſunk into the loweſt Proſtration of Mind! When I conſider thy "*excellent Great-*"*neſs*," and my own utter Inſignificancy!—And have I, exceſſively mean as I am, have I entertained any *conceited Apprehenſions* of myſelf? Have I felt the leaſt Elatement of Thought, in the Preſence of ſo majeſtic and adorable a Being? How ſhould this wound me with Sorrow, and cover me with Confuſion!—O my GOD, was I poſſeſſed of all the *high Perfections*, which accompliſh and adorn the Angels of Light; amidſt all theſe noble Endowments, I would fall down in the *deepeſt Abaſement* at thy Feet. Loſt in the infinitely ſuperior Blaze of thy uncreated Glories; I would confeſs myſelf, to be Nothing; to be leſs than Nothing, and Vanity.—How much more ought I to maintain the moſt unfeigned Humiliation, before thy Divine Majeſty; who am not only Duſt and Aſhes, but a Compound of Ignorance, Imperfection, and Depravity!

WHILE, beholding this vaſt Expanſe, I learn my own extreme Meanneſs; I would alſo diſcover the abject Littleneſs of all *terreſtrial Things*. —What is the Earth, with all her oſtentatious Scenes,

Scenes, compared with this aſtoniſhingly grand Furniture of the Skies? What, but a dim *Speck*, hardly perceivable in the Map of the Univerſe? It is obſerved, by a very judicious Writer*, That if the Sun himſelf, which enlightens this Part of the Creation, was extinguiſhed; and all the Hoſt of planetary Worlds, which move about him, were annihilated; they would not be miſſed, by an Eye that can take in the whole Compaſs of Nature, any more than a Grain of Sand upon the Sea Shore. The Bulk of which they conſiſt, and the Space which they occupy, is ſo exceedingly little in compariſon of the Whole; that their Loſs would ſcarce leave a Blank, in the Immenſity of GOD's Works.— If then, not our Globe only, but this whole Syſtem, be ſo very diminutive; what is a Kingdom, or a County? What are a few *Lordſhips*, or the ſo much admired *Patrimonies* of thoſe, who are ſtiled Wealthy †? When I meaſure them with my own little Pittance, they ſwell into proud and bloated Dimenſions. But, when I take the Univerſe for my Standard, how ſcanty is their Size, how contemptible their Figure! They ſhrink into *pompous Nothings* ‡.



* Spect. Vol. VIII. N° 565.

† *Juvat inter ſidera vagantem divitum pavimenta ridere, & totam cum auro ſuo terram.* SEN.

‡ *Terrellæ grandia inania.* WATTS's Hor. Lyr.

WHEN the keen-eyed Eagle ſoars above all the feathered Race, and leaves their very Sight below: when ſhe wings her Way, with direct Aſcent, up the Steep of Heaven; and, ſteadily gazing on the meridian Sun, accounts its beaming Splendors all her own: Does ſhe then regard, with any Solicitude, the *Mote* that is flying in the Air, or the *Duſt* which ſhe ſhook from her Feet? And ſhall this eternal Mind, which is capable of contemplating its Creator's Glory; which is intended to enjoy the Viſions of his Countenance; ſhall this *eternal Mind*, endued with ſuch great Capacities, and made for ſuch exalted Ends, be ſo *ignobly ambitious*, as to ſigh for the Tinſels of State; or ſo *poorly covetous*, as to graſp after ample Territories on a Needle's Point?—No: under the Influence of ſuch Conſiderations I feel my Sentiments expand, and my Wiſhes acquire a Turn of Sublimity. My throbbing Deſires after worldly Grandeur, die away; and I find myſelf, if not poſſeſſed of Power, yet ſuperior to its Charms.—Too long, muſt I own, have my Affections been pinioned by Vanity, and immured in this earthly Clod. But theſe Thoughts break the *Shackles* *. Theſe Objects

* The Soul of Man was made to walk the Skies,
Delightful Outlet of her Priſon here!
There, diſincumber'd from her Chains, the Ties
Of

Objects open the Door of *Liberty*. My Soul, fired by ſuch noble Proſpects, weighs Anchor from this little Nook; and coaſts no longer about its contracted Shores; dotes no longer on its painted Shells. The *Immenſity* of Things, is her Range; and an *Infinity* of Bliſs, is her Aim.

BEHOLD this immenſe Expanſe, and admire the *Condeſcenſion* of thy GOD.—In this Manner, an inſpired and princely Aſtronomer, improved his Survey of the nocturnal Heavens. *When I conſider thy Heavens, even the Works of thy Fingers, the Moon and the Stars which Thou haſt ordained*; I am ſmitten with Wonder at thy Glory, and cry out in a Tranſport of Gratitude, *LORD, what is Man, that Thou art mindful of him? or the Son of Man, that Thou viſiteſt him**? "How amazing, "how charming, is that Divine Benignity, "which is pleaſed to bow down its ſacred Re- "gards, to ſo fooliſh and worthleſs a Creature! "Yea, diſdains not, from the Height of infinite "Exaltation, to extend its kind providential

 "Care,

Of Toys terreſtrial, ſhe can rove at large;
There freely can reſpire, dilate, extend,
In full Proportion let looſe all her Powers.
*Night-Thoughts*, No IX.

* Pſal. viii. 3, 4.

" Care, to our moſt minute Concerns!—This " is amazing. But that the Everlaſting Sove- " reign ſhould give his Son, to be made Fleſh, " and become our Saviour! Shall I call it a " *Miracle* of condeſcending Goodneſs? Rather, " What are all Miracles, what are all Myſteries, " to this ineffable Gift!"

HAD the *brighteſt Archangel* been commiſſioned to come down, with the Olive-Branch of Peace in his Hand, ſignifying his Eternal Maker's Readineſs to be reconciled; on our bended Knees, with Tears of Joy, and a Torrent of Thankfulneſs, we ought to have received the tranſporting News. But when, inſtead of ſuch an angelic Envoy, He ſends His *only-begotten Son*; his Son beyond all Thought illuſtrious, to make us the gracious Overture: —ſends Him from the " Habitation of his " Holineſs and Glory," to put on the *Infirmities* of Mortality, and dwell in a Tabernacle of Clay:—ſends Him, not barely to make us a tranſient Viſit, but to abide *many Years* in our inferior and miſerable World:—ſends Him, not to exerciſe Dominion over Monarchs, but to wear out his Life in the ignoble Form of a *Servant*; and, at laſt, to make his Exit under the infamous Character of a *Malefactor!* Was ever Love like this? Did ever Grace ſtoop ſo low?

low*?—Should the Sun be ſhorn of all his radiant Honours, and degraded into a *Clod* of the Valleys; ſhould all the Dignitaries of Heaven

 be

* This reminds me of a very noble Piece of *ſacred Oratory*, where, in a fine Series of the moſt beautiful Gradations, the Apoſtle diſplays the admirably condeſcending Kindneſs of our Saviour.—*He thought it no Robbery*, it was His indiſputable Right, *to be equal with* the infinite, ſelf-exiſtent, immortal *GOD*. *Yet*, in Mercy to Sinners, *He emptied Himſelf* of the incommunicable Honours, *and* laid aſide the Robes of incomprehenſible Glory.—When He entered upon His mediatorial State, inſtead of acting in the grand Capacity of univerſal Sovereign, He *took upon him the Form of a Servant*. And not the Form of thoſe miniſtering Spirits, whoſe Duty is Dignity itſelf; who are throned, though adoring.—He took not on him the Nature of Angels, but ſtooped incomparably lower. Aſſumed a Body of animated Duſt, *and was made in the Likeneſs of Men*; thoſe inferior *and* depraved Creatures.—Aſtoniſhing Condeſcenſion! but not ſufficient for the overflowing Richneſs of the Redeemer's Love. For, *being found in Faſhion as a Man, He humbled Himſelf* farther ſtill. Occupied the loweſt Place, where all was low *and* ignoble. He not only ſubmitted to the Yoke of the Law, but alſo bore the Infirmities, and miniſtred to the Neceſſities of Mortals. He even waſhed the Feet of others, and had not where to lay his own Head.—Yea, He carried His meritorious Humiliation, to the very deepeſt Degrees of poſſible Abaſement. He *became obedient unto Death*—And not to a common or natural Death, but a Death more infamous than the Gibbet; more torturous than the Rack;—*even the* accurſed *Death of the Croſs*. Phil. ii. 6, 7, 8.

be depoſed from their Thrones, and degenerate into *Inſects* of a Day; great, great would be the Abaſement. But *nothing* to Thine, moſt bleſſed Jesus; *nothing* to Thine, Thou Prince of Peace; when, for us Men, and for our Salvation, Thou didſt not abhor the coarſe Accommodations of the *Manger*; Thou didſt not decline even the gloomy Horrors of the *Grave*.

'Tis well, the ſacred Oracles have given this Doctrine, the moſt explicit Confirmation, and Evidence quite inconteſtable. Otherwiſe, a Favour ſo undeſerved, ſo unexpected, and rich beyond all Imagination, might ſtagger our Belief.—Could He, who launches all theſe planetary Globes, through the illimitable Void; and leads them on, from Age to Age, in their extenſive Career; could He reſign his Hands, to be *confined* by the girding Cord; and his Back to be *plowed*, by the bloody Scourge?—Could He, who crowns all the Stars with inextinguiſhable *Brightneſs*; be Himſelf defiled with *Spitting*, and disfigured with the thorny Scar? It is the greateſt of Wonders, and yet the ſureſt of Truths.

O! Ye mighty Orbs, that roll along the Spaces of the Sky; I wondered, a little while ago, at your vaſt Dimenſions, and ample Circuits. But now my Amazement ceaſes; or rather,

ther, is intirely ſwallowed up by a much more ſtupendous Subject. Methinks, your enormous Bulk is ſhrivelled to an *Atom*; your prodigious Revolutions are contracted to a *Span*; while I muſe upon the far more elevated Heights, and unfathomable Depths; the infinitely more extended Lengths, and unlimited Breadths, *of* this *Love of GOD in CHRIST JESUS**.

CONTEMPLATING this ſtately Expanſe, I ſee a Mirror, which repreſents, in the moſt awful Colours, the *Heinouſneſs* of human *Guilt*. —Ten thouſand Volumes; wrote on purpoſe, to diſplay the Aggravations of my various Acts of Diſobedience; could not ſo effectually convince me of their inconceivable Enormity, as the Conſideration of that *all-glorious Perſon* †; who, to make an Atonement for them, ſpilt the laſt Drop of his Blood.—*I have ſinned*, may every Child of *Adam* ſay; *and what ſhall I do unto Thee, O Thou Obſerver of Men*‡? Shall I give my

* Eph. iii. 18, 19.

† *Quo quiſque altius aſcendit in agnitione* CHRISTI, *eo profundius peccati atrocitatem cognoſcet.*

‡ *Job* vii. 20. Not *Preſerver*, as it ſtands in our Verſion, but *Obſerver of Men*. Which Phraſe, as it denotes the exact and inceſſant *Inſpection* of the divine Eye; as it intimates the abſolute Impoſſibility, that any Tranſgreſſion ſhould *eſcape* the divine Notice; is evidently moſt proper, both to aſſign the *Reaſon*, and heighten the *Emphaſis* of the Context.

my Firſt-born for my Tranſgreſſion, the Fruit of my Body for the Sin of my Soul? Vain Commutation! and ſuch as would be rejected by the bleſſed GOD, with the utmoſt Abhorrence.—Will all the *Potentates*, that ſway the Sceptre in a thouſand Kingdoms, devote their royal and honoured Lives, to reſcue an obnoxious Creature from the Stroke of Vengeance? Alaſs! it muſt coſt more, incomparably more, to expiate the Malignity of Sin, and ſave a guilty Wretch from Hell.—Will all the *Principalities* of *Heaven* be content to aſſume my Nature, and reſign themſelves to Death for my Pardon*? Even this, would be too mean a Satisfaction,

* MILTON ſets this Thought, in a very poetical and ſtriking Light.—All the Sanctities of Heaven, ſtand round the Throne of the Supreme Majeſty. GOD foreſees and foretels the Fall of Man; the *Ruin*, which will unavoidably enſue on his Tranſgreſſion; and the utter *Impoſſibility*, of his being able to extricate himſelf, from the Abyſs of Miſery.

*He, with his whole Poſterity, muſt die;*
*Die he, or Juſtice muſt; unleſs for Him*
*Some other able, and as willing pay*
*The rigid Satisfaction, Death for Death.*

After which affecting Repreſentation, intended to raiſe the moſt tender Emotions of Pity; the following Inquiry is addreſſed to all the ſurrounding Angels;

*Say,*

Satisfaction, for inexorable Juſtice; too ſcanty a Reparation, of GOD's injured Honour. So flagrant is human Guilt, that nothing, but a Victim of *infinite Dignity*, could conſtitute an adequate Propitiation.—*He* who ſaid, "Let "there be Light, and there was Light;" Let there be a Firmament, and immediately the blue Curtains floated in the Sky; *He* muſt take Fleſh; HE muſt feel the fierce Torments of Crucifixion; and pour out his Soul in Agonies, if ever ſuch Tranſgreſſors are pardoned.

How

*Say, heav'nly Powers, where ſhall we find ſuch Love?*
*Which of you will be mortal, to redeem*
*Man's mortal Crime? and die, the Dead to ſave?*
*He aſk'd; but all the heav'nly Choir ſtood mute,*
*And Silence was in Heav'n.—*

There is, to me at leaſt, an inimitable Spirit and Beauty in the laſt Circumſtance.—That ſuch an innumerable Multitude, of generous and compaſſionate Beings, ſhould be ſtruck *dumb* with Surprize and Terror, at the very Mention of *The deadly Forfeiture and Ranſom ſet!* No *Language* is ſo eloquent as this *Silence*. Words could not poſſibly have expreſſed, in ſo emphatical a Manner, the *dreadful Nature* of the Taſk; the *abſolute Inability* of any or all Creatures to execute it; the ſuper-eminent and *matchleſs Love* of the Eternal Son, in undertaking the tremendous Work; not only without Reluctance, but unſought and unimplored; with Readineſs, Alacrity, and Delight. *Paradiſe Loſt*, Book III. Line 209. Edit. BENTL.

How vaſt is that Debt; which all the Wealth of both the *Indies* cannot diſcharge! How vitiated that Habit of Body; which all the Drugs produced by Nature herſelf, cannot rectify! But how much more *ruined* was thy Condition, O my Soul! how much more *heinous* were thy Crimes! Since nothing leſs than the Sufferings and Death of Meſſiah, the Son of GOD, and radiant Image of his Glory, could effect thy Recovery, or cancel thy Iniquity.—Though perhaps, thou art not ſunk ſo very deep in Pollution, as ſome of the moſt abandoned Profligates; yet remember the ineſtimable Ranſom, paid to redeem thee from everlaſting Deſtruction. Remember this; and "never open thy Mouth any more*," either to *murmur* at the Divine Chaſtiſements, or to *glory* in thy own Attainments. Remember this; and even "*loath* "thyſelf† for the Multitude of thy Provoca-"tions," and thy great Baſeneſs.

ONCE more: Let me view this beautiful, this magnificent Expanſe; and conceive ſome juſter Apprehenſions, of the unknown Richneſs of my *Saviour's Atonement*.—I am informed by a Writer, who cannot miſtake, that the High-Prieſt

* Ezek. xvi. 63. † Ezek. xxxvi. 31.

Prieſt of my Profeſſion, who was alſo the Sacrifice for my Sins, is *higher than the Heavens* *; more exalted in Dignity, more bright with Glory, than all the heavenly Manſions, and all their illuſtrious Inhabitants. If my Heart was humbled, at the Conſideration of its exceſſive Guilt; how do all my drooping Powers revive, at this delightful Thought? The poor Criminal, that ſeemed to be *tottering* on the very Brink of the infernal Pit; is *raiſed*, by ſuch a Belief, even to the Portals of Paradiſe. My Self-abaſement, I truſt, will always continue; but my Fears, under the Influence of ſuch a Conviction, are quite gone †. I do not, I cannot

* Heb. vii. 26.

† I am ſorry to find, that ſome of my Readers were a little diſguſted at this Expreſſion, "*My Fears are quite "gone.*" As thinking, it diſcovered a Tincture of Arrogance in the Writer, and tended to diſcourage the weak Chriſtian. But, I hope, a more mature Conſideration will acquit me, from *both* theſe Charges.—For, what has the Author ſaid? Only, that at ſome *peculiarly happy* Moments, when the Holy Ghoſt bears Witneſs of CHRIST in his Heart, and He is favoured with a Glimpſe of the Redeemer's matchleſs Excellency—that, in theſe *brighter Intervals* of Life, his trembling Fears, with regard to the decifive Sentence of the great Tribunal, are turned into pleaſing Expectations. And what is there in ſuch a Declaration, offenſive to the *ſtricteſt* Modeſty, or diſpiriting to the *weakeſt* Believer? Inſtead of creating Diſcouragement,

cannot doubt the Efficacy of this Propitiation. *While I ſee a* Glimpſe of its matchleſs Excellency; and *verily believe* myſelf, intereſted in its Merits; I know not what it is, to feel any miſgiving Suſpicions; but am ſtedfaſt in Faith, and joyful through Hope.

BE my Iniquities like Debts of Millions of Talents, here is more than full Payment for all that prodigious Sum. Let the Enemy of Mankind, and Accuſer of the Brethren, load me with Invectives; this one Plea, *A Divine Redeemer died*, moſt thoroughly quaſhes every Indictment. For, though there be much Turpitude, and manifold Tranſgreſſions, "there is no Condem-"nation to thoſe that are in CHRIST JESUS."— Nay, were I chargeable with all the vileſt Deeds, which have been committed in every Age of the World, by every Nation of Men; even in this moſt deplorable Caſe, I need not ſink into Deſpair. Even ſuch Guilt, though grievous beyond

ment, it points out the Way to obtain a ſettled Tranquillity. Its natural Tendency is, to engage the ſerious Mind in a more conſtant and attentive Meditation, on the unknown Merits of the Divine MEDIATOR. And were we more *thoroughly* acquainted, more *deeply* affected, with his unutterable Dignity; I am perſuaded, our uneaſy Apprehenſions would *proportionably* vaniſh; our Faith be eſtabliſhed, our Hopes brightened, and our Joys inlarged.

beyond all Expreſſion, is not to be compared with that *Abundance* of *Grace* and Righteouſneſs, which dwell in the incarnate Divinity.—How great, how tranſcendently glorious, are the *Perfections* of the adored JEHOVAH! So great, ſo ſuperlatively precious, is the *Expiation* of the dying JESUS. 'Tis impoſſible for the human Mind, to *exalt* this Atonement *, too highly; 'tis impoſſible for the HUMBLE PENITENT, to *confide* in it, too ſteadily. The Scriptures, the Scriptures of eternal Truth, have ſaid it (exult, my Soul, in the Belief of it!), that the Blood on which we rely, is GOD's *own Blood* †; and therefore all-ſufficient to expiate, omnipotent to ſave.

*DAVID,*

* This Doctrine, tho' rich with *Conſolation* to the ruined Sinner; yet, is it not likely to open a Door for *Licentiouſneſs*; and embolden Tranſgreſſors to proſecute their VICES?—No: It is the moſt powerful Motive to that genuine Repentance, which *flows* from an unfeigned Love of GOD; and *operates* in a hearty Deteſtation of all Sin. One, who knew the unmeaſurable Goodneſs of the LORD, and was no Stranger to the ſinful Perverſeneſs of our Nature, ſays, *There is Mercy with Thee:* THEREFORE *ſhalt thou be feared.* Pſal. cxxx. 4.—Words, full to my Purpoſe; which at once add the *higheſt* Authority to this Sentiment, and direct our Minds to its proper Influence, and due Improvement.

† Acts xx. 28.

*DAVID*, that egregious Sinner, but more exemplary Saint, ſeems to have been well acquainted with this comfortable Truth. What elſe can be the Import of that very remarkable, but moſt devout Declaration? *Thou ſhalt purge me* with Hyſſop, and I ſhall be clean: thou ſhalt waſh me, and I ſhall be whiter than Snow.*—"I "have been guilty, I muſt confeſs, of the moſt "complicated and ſhocking Crimes: Crimes, "inflamed by every aggravating Circumſtance, "with regard to Myſelf, my Neighbour, and "my GOD. *Myſelf*, who have been bleſſed "above Men, and the diſtinguiſhed Favourite "of Providence; *my Neighbour*, who, in the "moſt dear and tender Intereſts, has been irre-"parably injured; *my GOD*, who might juſtly "expect the moſt grateful Returns of Duty, in-"ſtead of ſuch enormous Violations of his Law. "Yet, all horrid and execrable as *my Offence* "is, it is nothing to the ſuperabundant Merit "of that *great Redeemer*, who was promiſed "from

* *Pſal.* li. 7. *Thou ſhalt purge.* I prefer this Tranſlation, before the new one. Becauſe this ſpeaks the Language of a more ſtedfaſt Belief, and gives the higheſt Honour to the Divine Goodneſs. Were the Words intended to bear no more than the common *petitionary* Senſe; and not to be expreſſive of a noble *Plerophery* of Faith; they would rather have been—תטאני and בבני *Imperatives*, not *Futures*.

"from the Foundations of the World; in "whom all my Fathers truſted; who is the "Hope of all the Ends of the Earth. Though "my Conſcience be more loathſome, with adul-"terous Impurity, than the *Dunghil*; though "Treachery and Murder have rendered it even "black as the Gloom of *Hell*; yet, waſhed in "the 'Fountain opened for Sin and for Un-"cleanneſs*,' I ſhall be—I ſay not, pure only, "this were a Diſparagement to the Efficacy "of my Saviour's Death; but I ſhall be fair "as the *Lily*, and white as the *Snow*. Nay, "let me not derogate from the glorious Object "of my Confidence; cleanſed by this ſovereign "ſanctifying Stream, I ſhall be *fairer* than the "full-blown Lily, *whiter* than the new-fallen "Snows."

*POWER*, ſaith the Scripture, *belongeth unto GOD*†.—And in what majeſtic Lines, is this Attribute of JEHOVAH written, throughout the whole Volume of the Creation? Eſpecially, through thoſe magnificent Pages, unfolded in yonder ſtarry Regions. Which are therefore ſtiled, by the ſweet and ſeraphic Singer of *Iſrael*, "The Firmament of his Power‡." Becauſe, the grand *Exploits* of *Omnipotence* are there diſ-



* Zech. xiii. 1. † Pſal. lxii. 11. ‡ Pſal. cl. 1.

played, with the utmoſt Pomp; and recorded, in the moſt legible Characters.

WHO, that looks upward to the midnight Sky; and, with an Eye of Reaſon, beholds its rolling Wonders; who can forbear enquiring, Of *what* were thoſe mighty Orbs *formed?*—Amazing to relate! They were produced without Materials. They ſprung from Emptineſs itſelf. The ſtately Fabric of univerſal Nature emerged out of *Nothing*.—What *Inſtruments* were uſed by the Supreme Architect, to faſhion the Parts with ſuch exquiſite Niceneſs, and give ſo beautiful a Poliſh to the whole? How was all connected into one finely-proportioned, and nobly-finiſhed ſtructure?—A *bare Fiat* accompliſhed all. LET THEM BE, ſaid GOD. He added no more; and immediately the marvellous Edifice aroſe; adorned with every Beauty; diſplaying innumerable Perfections; and declaring, amidſt enraptured Seraphs, its great Creator's Praiſe. "By the *Word* of the "LORD were the Heavens made, and all the "Hoſt of them by the *Breath* of his Mouth *."

—What

* If this Thought is admitted a Second Time, and ſuffered to ennoble the next Paragraph; it is partly, becauſe of its unequalled *Sublimity*; partly, becauſe it awakens the moſt *grand* Idea of creating Power; and partly, becauſe the Practice of the *Pſalmiſt*, an Authority

—What forceful Machinery *fixed* ſome of thoſe ponderous Globes, on an immoveable Baſis? What irreſiſtible Impulſe *bowled* others, through the Circuit of the Heavens? What coerſive Energy *confined* their impetuous Courſes, within Limits aſtoniſhingly large, yet moſt minutely true?—Nothing but his *ſovereign Will.* For all Things were at firſt conſtituted, and all to this Day abide, according to his Ordinance."

WITHOUT any toilſome Aſſiduity or laborious Proceſs, to raiſe—to touch—to *ſpeak* ſuch a Multitude of immenſe Bodies into Being—to *launch* them through the Spaces of the Sky, as an Arrow from the Hand of a Giant—to impreſs on ſuch *unwieldy* Maſſes a Motion, far outſtripping the Swiftneſs of the winged Creation *



rity too great to be controverted, is my Precedent.—The beautiful Stanza quoted from *Pſal.* xxxiii. 6. is a Proof, how thoroughly the Royal Poet entered into the Majeſty of the *Moſaic* Narration. The Repetition of the Sentiment, *ver.* 9, intimates, how peculiarly he was charmed, with that *noble Manner*, of deſcribing the Divine Operations. While the Turn of his own Compoſition ſhews, how perfectly he poſſeſſed the ſame *elevated Way* of thinking. And this, long before *Longinus* wrote the celebrated Treatiſe, which has taught the Heathen, as well as the Chriſtian World, to admire the *Dignity* of the *Jewiſh* Legiſlator's Stile. *Vid.* LONGIN. *de Sublim.* Sect. IX.

* To give *one* Inſtance of this Remark.—The Earth, in the diurnal Revolution, which it performs on its own Axis,

—and to *continue* them in the ſame rapid Whirl, for Thouſands and Thouſands of Years—What an amazing Inſtance of infinite Might is this!—Can any thing be impoſſible to the LORD, the LORD GOD; the Creator and Controuler, of all the Ends of the Earth, all the Regions of the Univerſe? Rather, is not all that we count *difficult*, perfect Eaſe to that glorious Being, who only ſpake, and the World was made*? Who only gave Command, and the ſtupendous Axle was lodged faſt, the lofty Wheels moved complete?—What a ſure Defence, O my Soul, is this everlaſting Strength of thy GOD! Be this thy continual *Refuge*, in the Article of Danger; this thy never-failing *Reſource*, in every Time of Need.

WHAT

Axis, *whirls about* at the Rate of above a Thouſand Miles an Hour. And as the great Orbit, which it deſcribes annually round the Sun, is reckoned at 540 Millions of Miles, it muſt *travel* near a Million and Half, each Day. —What a *Force* muſt be requiſite, to protrude ſo vaſt a Globe: and wheel it on, loaded as it is with huge Mountains, and ponderous Rocks, at ſuch a prodigious Degree of Rapidity! It ſurpaſſes human Conception!—How natural, how pertinent, how almoſt neceſſary, after ſuch an Obſervation, is the Acknowledgement made by holy *Job! I know that* THOU *canſt do every thing, and that no Thought*, no imaginable Scheme, *can be withholden from thee*, can lie beyond thy Power to execute. Chap. xlii. 2.

* Pſal. xxxiii. 9.

WHAT cannot this uncontroulable Power, of the great JEHOVAH, effect for his People? Be their Miſeries ever ſo galling, cannot this GOD relieve them? Be their Wants ever ſo numerous, cannot this GOD ſupply them? Be their Corruptions within, ever ſo inveterate; or their Temptations without, ever ſo importunate; cannot this mighty, mighty GOD ſubdue the former, and fortify them againſt the latter?—Should *Trials*, with an inceſſant Vehemence, ſift thee as Wheat; ſhould *Tribulation*, with a Weight of Woes, almoſt grind thee to Powder; ſhould *Pleaſure*, with her bewitching Smiles, ſolicit thee to delicious Ruin; yet "hold thee faſt by GOD," and lay thy Help upon Him, that is omnipotent *. Thou canſt

 not

* It is a moſt charming Deſcription, as well as a moſt comfortable Promiſe, which we find in *Iſa.* xl. 29, 30, 31.—*He giveth Power to the Feeble; and to them that have no Might* at all, *He* not only imparteth, but *increaſeth Strength*; making it to abound, where it did not ſo much as exiſt.—Without this Aid of JEHOVAH, *even the Youths*, amidſt the very Prime of their Vigour and Activity, *ſhall become languid* in their Work, *and weary* in their Courſe. *And the young Men*, to whoſe Reſolution and Abilities nothing ſeemed impracticable, *ſhall* not only not ſucceed, but *utterly fall*, and miſcarry in their various Enterprizes—*Whereas, they that wait upon the LORD*, and confide in his Grace, ſhall preſs on, with a generous

not be involved in ſuch calamitous Circumſtances, or expoſed to ſuch imminent Peril; but

generous Ardor, from one Degree of religious Improvement to another. Inſtead of exhauſting, they *ſhall renew their Strength*; Difficulties ſhall animate, and Toil invigorate them. *They ſhall mount up*, as *with* ſoaring *Wings*, above all Oppoſition; they ſhall be carried through every Diſcouragement, *as Eagles* cleave the yielding Air. *They ſhall run*, with Speed and Alacrity, the Way of GOD's Commandments, *and not be weary*; *They ſhall hold on*, (ילכו *progredientur*, *carpent iter*) with Conſtancy and Perſeverance, in thoſe peaceful Paths, *and not faint*; but arrive at the End of their Progreſs, and receive the Prize of their High Calling.

To this moſt chearing Doctrine, permit me to add its no leſs beautiful and delightful *Contraſt*. *Eliphaz*, ſpeaking of the Enemies of the Righteous, ſays—לא נכחד קימנו —which is rendered by a great Critic in ſacred Learning, *Nihil exciſum factio nobis adverſaria*.—We ſhould reckon, our Language acquitted itſelf tolerably well, if, when depreciating the Abilities of an Adverſary, it ſhould repreſent them weak as the *ſcorched Thread*, feeble as the *diſſolving Smoke*. But theſe are cold Forms of Speech, compared with the Eloquence of the Eaſt. According to the Genius of our Bible, *All the Power that oppoſes the Godly, is* a mere Nothing; or, to ſpeak with a more emphatical Air of Contempt, *a deſtroyed, an extirpated Nothing*.—Admire this Expreſſion, ye that are charmed with daring Images, and (what *Tully* calls *verbum ardens*) a ſpirited and glowing Diction.—Remember this Declaration, ye that fight the good Fight of Faith. The united Force of all your Enemies, be it ever ſo formidable to the Eye of Fleſh, is, before your Almighty Guardian, *Nihil nihiliſſimum*, not only Nothing, but *leſs than nothing*, and Vanity. *Job* xxii. 20.

but thy GOD, whom thou ſerveſt, is able to deliver thee from the one, and to ſupport thee under the other.—To *ſupport!* to *deliver!* Let me not diſhonour the unlimited Greatneſs of his Power. He is able to exalt Thee, from the deepeſt Diſtreſs, to the moſt triumphant Joy; and to make even a Complication of Evils, work together for thy everlaſting Good. *He is able*, not only to accompliſh what I have been ſpeaking, but *to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can aſk, or think* *.

O! THE *wretched Condition* of the Wicked, who have this LORD of all Power for their

 Enemy!

* I ſhould, in this Place, avoid ſwelling the Notes any farther, was it not to take Notice of the inimitable Paſſage quoted above, and to be found *Eph.* iii. 20.—Which, if I do not greatly miſtake, is the moſt complete Repreſentation of Divine Power, that it is poſſible for Words to frame.—To do all that our Tongues can *aſk*, is a Miracle of Might. But we often think more than we can expreſs, and are actuated with "*Groanings unutterable.*" Yet, to anſwer theſe vaſt Deſires, is not beyond the Accompliſhment of our heavenly Father.—Nay, to make his Gifts and his Bleſſings commenſurate to the *largeſt Stretch* of human Expectations, is a ſmall thing with the GOD of Glory. He is able to do *above all*, that the moſt inlarged Apprehenſion can imagine; yea, to do *abundantly* more, *exceeding abundantly* more, than the Mind itſelf, in the utmoſt Exertion of all its Faculties, is capable of *wiſhing*, or knows how to *conceive*.

Enemy! O! the *deſperate Madneſs* of the Ungodly, who provoke the Almighty to Jealouſy! —Beſotted Creatures! are you able to contend with your Maker, and enter the Liſts againſt incenſed Omnipotence? Can you *bear* the Fierceneſs of his Wrath, or ſuſtain the Vengeance of his lifted Arm? At his Preſence, though awfully ſerene, the Hills melt like Wax, and the "Mountains ſkip like frighted Lambs." At the leaſt Intimation of his Diſpleaſure, the Foundations of Nature rock, and the "Pillars "of Heaven tremble." How then can a withered Leaf endure, when "his Lips are full of "Indignation, and his Tongue as a devouring "Fire?"—Or can any thing *ſcreen* a guilty Worm, when the great and terrible GOD ſhall *whet his glittering Sword, and his Hand take hold on* inexorable *Judgment?* When *that Hand*, which ſhoots the Planets, Maſſes of exceſſive Bulk *, with ſuch ſurpriſing Rapidity, through the

* One of the Planets (*Saturn*) is ſuppoſed to be more than 90 times as big, as the Globe on which we live. According to the ſame Calculation, the largeſt of the Planets (*Jupiter*) is above 200 times vaſter, than this vaſt Collection of ſpacious Foreſts, towering Mountains, extenſive Continents, and boundleſs Oceans.—Such enormous Magnitude! winged with ſuch prodigious Speed! —It raiſes Aſtoniſhment beyond Expreſſion.—*With GOD is terrible Majeſty!* Job xxxvii. 22.—*Who ſhall not fear* THEE, O LORD, *and glorify thy Name?* Rev. xv. 4.

the Sky: *that Hand*, which darts the Comets to ſuch unmeaſurable Diſtances, beyond the Orbit of our remoteſt Planet, beyond the Purſuit of the ſtrongeſt Eye: when THAT HAND is ſtretched out to puniſh, can the Munition of Rocks, the Intervention of Seas, or even interpoſing Worlds, divert the Blow?—Conſider this, *Ambition*; and bow thy haughty Creſt. Conſider this, *Diſobedience*; and bend thy iron Sinew. O! conſider this, all ye that forget, or affront, the tremendous JEHOVAH. He can, by a ſingle Act of his Will, lay the Univerſe in utter Ruin: and can He want Power to bring *you*, in a Moment, in the Twinkling of an Eye, to the Duſt of Death, or to the Flames of Hell? He has—I ſay not, Ten thouſand Lightnings to ſcorch you to Aſhes; Ten thouſand Thunders to cruſh you into Atoms; but, what is unſpeakably more dreadful—He has an *Army* of Terrors, even in the *Look* of his angry Countenance. His very Frown is worſe than Deſtruction.

I CANNOT diſmiſs this Subject, without admiring the *Patience* of the bleſſed GOD. Who, though ſo ſtrong and powerful, yet "is pro-"voked every Day."—Surely, as is his Majeſty, ſo is his Mercy; his Pity altogether commenſurate to his Power. If I vilify but the Name

Name of an earthly Monarch; I loſe my Liberty, and am confined to the Dungeon. If I appear in Arms, and draw the Sword, againſt my national Sovereign; my Life is forfeited, and my very Blood will ſcarce atone for the Crime. But Thee I have diſhonoured, O! thou King immortal and inviſible! Againſt Thee my Breaſt has fomented *ſecret Diſaffection*; my Behaviour has riſen up in *open Rebellion*; and yet I am ſpared, yet I am preſerved. Inſtead of being baniſhed from thy Preſence; I ſit at thy Table, and am fed from thy Hand. Inſtead of purſuing me with *Thunder-bolts* of Vengeance, thy *Favours* ſurround me on every Side. That Arm, that injured Arm, which might juſtly fall, with irretrievable Ruin, on a Traitor's Head; is moſt graciouſly ſtretched out, to careſs him, with the tendereſt Endearments; to cheriſh him, with every Inſtance of parental Kindneſs.—O! thou mightieſt, thou beſt of Beings, how am I pained at my very Soul, for ſuch ſhameful and odious Diſingenuity! Let me always abominate myſelf, as the baſeſt of Creatures; but *adore* that unwearied Long-ſuffering of thine, which refuſes to be irritated; *love* that unremitted Goodneſs, which no Acts of Ingratitude could ſtop, or ſo much as check, in its gracious Current. O! let this ſtubborn Heart;

Heart; which Duty could not bind; which Threatenings could not awe; be the Captive, the *willing Captive*, of ſuch triumphant Beneficence.

I HAVE often been ſtruck with Wonder at that Almighty Skill, which *weighed* the Mountains in Scales, and the Hills in a Balance; which *proportioned* the Waters in the Hollow of its Hand, and *adjuſted* the Duſt of the Earth * by

* *Iſa.* xl. 12. *The Duſt of the Earth*, in this ſublime Scripture, ſignifies the dry Land, or *ſolid* Part of our Globe. Which is placed in Contradiſtinction to the whole Collection of *fluid* Matter, mentioned in the preceding Clauſe—Perhaps, this remarkable Expreſſion may be intended to intimate, not only the extreme Niceneſs, which ſtated the Dimenſions of the World *in general*, or in the groſs; but alſo that *particular Exactneſs*, with which the very ſmalleſt Materials, that conſtitute its Frame, (not excepting each individual Atom,) were calculated and diſpoſed.—*q. d.* 'Tis a ſmall Thing to ſay, No ſuch enormous Redundancies, as unneceſſary Ridges of Mountains, were ſuffered to ſubſiſt. There was not ſo much as the leaſt Grain of Sand *ſuperfluous*, or a ſingle Particle of Duſt *deficient*.—As the grand Aim of the Deſcription is, to celebrate the *conſummate Wiſdom*, exemplified in the Creation; and to diſplay that *perfect Proportion*, with which every Part tallies, coincides, and harmonizes, with the Whole; I have taken Leave to alter the Word of our *Engliſh* Tranſlation *comprehend*, and introduce in its Stead a Term, equally faithful to the *Hebrew*, and more ſignificative of the Prophet's preciſe Idea.

by a Meaſure. But how much more marvellous is that magnificent Œconomy, which *poiſed* the Stars with inexpreſſible Nicety, and *meted* out the Heavens with a Span! Where all is prodigiouſly vaſt; immenſely various; and yet more than mathematically exact. Surely, the *Wiſdom* of GOD manifeſts itſelf in the Skies, and ſhines in thoſe lucid Orbs. Shines on the contemplative Mind, with a Luſtre incomparably brighter, than that which their united Splendors tranſmit to the Eye.

BEHOLD yonder countleſs Multitude of Globes; conſider their amazing Magnitude; regard them as the Sovereigns of ſo many Syſtems, each accompanied with his planetary Equipage. Upon this Suppoſition, what a Multiplicity of mighty Spheres, muſt be perpetually running their Rounds, in the upper Regions! Yet, none miſtake their Way, or *wander* from the Gaol; though they paſs through trackleſs and unbounded Fields. None *fly off* from their Orbits, into extravagant Excurſions; none *preſs in* upon their Centre, with too near an Approach. None *interfere* with each other in their perennial Paſſage; or *intercept* the kindly Communications of another's Influence *. But all their Rotations

* The Interception of Light, by means of an Eclipſe, happens very *rarely*. And then is of ſo *ſhort* a Continuance,

tions proceed in eternal Harmony; keeping ſuch Time, and obſerving ſuch Laws, as are moſt exquiſitely adapted to the Perfection of the Whole.

WHILE I contemplate this "excellent Wiſ-"dom, which made the Heavens," and attunes all their Motions; how am I abaſhed at that Mixture of Arrogance and Folly, which has, at any Time, inclined me to *murmur* at thy *Diſpenſations*, O LORD! What is this, but a ſort of implicit Treaſon againſt thy Supremacy; and a tacit Denial of thy infinite Underſtanding?—Haſt Thou ſo regularly placed ſuch a wonderful Diverſity of Syſtems, through the Spaces of the Univerſe?—Didſt Thou, without any probationary Eſſays, without any improving Retouches, ſpeak them into the moſt conſummate Perfection?—Doſt Thou continually ſuperintend all their Circumſtances, with a Sagacity that never miſtakes the minuteſt Tittle of Propriety? And ſhall I be ſo unaccountably ſtupid, as to queſtion the *Juſtneſs* of thy *Diſcernment*, in "chooſing my Inheritance, and fixing the "Bounds of my Habitation!"—Not a ſingle Erratum, in modelling the Structure; determining

ance, as not to be at all inconvenient. Nay, it is attended with ſuch *Circumſtances*, as render it rather uſeful, than prejudicial.

mining the Diſtance*; and conducting the Career of *unnumbered* Worlds! And ſhall my peeviſh Humour preſume to cenſure thy Interpoſition, with regard to the Affairs of *one* inconſiderable Creature; whoſe Stature, in ſuch a comparative View, is leſs than a Span; and his preſent Duration, little more than a Moment?

O! THOU GOD, "in whoſe Hand my "Breath is, and whoſe are all my Ways;" let ſuch Sentiments as now poſſeſs my Thoughts, be always lively on my Heart! Theſe ſhall compoſe my Mind into a *chearful* Acquieſcence, and a *thankful* Submiſſion; even when Afflictions gall the Senſe, or Diſappointments break my Schemes. Then ſhall I, like the grateful Patriarch,

* The Sun in particular (and let this ſerve as a Specimen of that moſt curious Exactneſs, with which the other celeſtial Bodies are conſtituted, and all their Circumſtances regulated) the Sun is formed of ſuch a determined Magnitude, and placed at ſuch a convenient Diſtance—"as not to annoy, but only refreſh us, and nouriſh the "Groun with its kindly Warmth. If it was *larger*, it "would ſet the Earth on Fire; if *ſmaller*, it would leave "it frozen. If it was *nearer* us, we ſhould be ſcorched "to Death; if *farther* from us, we ſhould not be able to "live for Want of Heat."

STACKHOUSE's *Hiſtory of the Bible.*

triarch*, in all the Changes of my Condition, and even in the Depths of Diſtreſs, erect an *Altar* of adoring Reſignation; and inſcribe it with the Apoſtle's *Motto*, To GOD ONLY WISE. Then, ſhouldſt Thou give me Leave to be the Carver of my own Fortunes, I would humbly deſire to relinquiſh the Grant, and recommit the Diſpoſal of myſelf to thy unerring Beneficence. Fully perſuaded, that *thy Counſels*; though contrary to my froward Inclinations, or even afflictive to my Fleſh; are incomparably more eligible, than the blind Impulſe of my own Will, however ſoothing to animal Nature.

ON a careleſs Inſpection, you perceive no Accuracy or Uniformity in the Poſition of the heavenly Bodies. They appear like an *illuſtrious Chaos*; a promiſcuous Heap of ſhining Globes; neither ranked in Order, nor moving by Line. —But, what *ſeems* Confuſion, *is* all Regularity. What carries a Show of Negligence, is really the Reſult of the moſt maſterly Contrivance. You think, perhaps, they rove in their aëreal Flight; but they rove by the niceſt Rule, and without the leaſt Error. Their Circuits, though ſeemingly devious; their Mazes, though intricate to our

* See *Gen.* xii. 7, 8.

" Though *Clouds and Darkneſs*, impenetrable by " any human Scrutiny, *were* ſometimes *round* " *about* the ſupreme Conductor of Things; yet " *Righteouſneſs and Judgment were the* conſtant " *Habitation of his Seat**; the invariable Stan- " dard of all his Adminiſtrations."—Thus (if I may illuſtrate the grandeſt Truths, by inferior Occurrences) while we view the Arras, on the Side of *leaſt Diſtinction*, it is void of any elegant Fancy; without any nice Strokes of Art; nothing but a confuſed Jumble of incoherent Threads. No ſooner is the Piece beheld in its *proper Aſpect*, but the ſuſpected Rudeneſs vaniſhes, and the moſt curious Arrangement takes place. We are charmed with Deſigns of the fineſt Taſte, and Figures of the moſt graceful Form. All is ſhaped with Symmetry; all is clad in Beauty.

THE *Goodneſs* of GOD is moſt eminently diſplayed in the Skies.—Could we take an underſtanding Survey, of whatever is formed by the Divine Architect, throughout the whole Extent of *material* Things; our Minds would be tranſported with their Excellencies, and our Tongues echo back that great Encomium, They are " good, very good †." Moſt *beau-*

*tiful*

* Pſal. xcvii. 2. † Gen. i. 31.

*tiful* † in themſelves; contrived by unerring Wiſdom, and executed with inimitable Skill. Moſt *uſeful* † in their Functions; exactly fitting the Places they fill, and compleatly anſwering the Purpoſes, for which they were intended.—All the Parts of the inanimate Creation proclaim, both by their intrinſic and relative Excellencies, the all-diffuſive Beneficence of their Maker.

How much more wonderful are the Diſplays of Divine Indulgence, in the Worlds of Life! Becauſe, dead Matter is incapable of Delight; therefore, the gracious Creator has raiſed innumerable Ranks of *perceptive Exiſtence*. Such as are qualified to taſte his Bounty, and enjoy each a Happineſs ſuited to its peculiar



† † This καλοκαγαθια of the Univerſe, and all its Parts, has been very highly, and very juſtly extolled, by the ancient Inquirers into Nature. And was, indeed, an illuſtrious Scene, ſpread before the Sages of the Heathen World; wherein to contemplate the Goodneſs, and the Glories, of the Supreme Being.—It was nobly ſaid, by a Pagan Philoſopher, on this Occaſion; Εις ιδια μεταβληθηναι τον Θεον μελλοντα δημιουργειν. *That* GOD, *when he undertook the Work of Creation, transformed Himſelf into Love.* —But he need not *transform* Himſelf into this amiable Principle; for "GOD *is* Love." As was much more nobly ſaid by One, whom that *Philoſopher* would have termed a *Barbarian*. 1 *John* iv. 8.

State. With this View, He furniſhed the Regions of inferior Nature, with an Order and a Series of ſenſitive Beings. The *Waters* teem with Shoals of finny Inhabitants. The *dry Land* ſwarms with Animals of every Order. The Dwellings of the *Firmament*, are occupied by Multitudes of winged People. Not ſo much as a *green Leaf*, Philoſophers ſay, but lodges, and accommodates, its puny animalcule Tenants *. — And wherefore this Diverſity, this Profuſion of living Creatures; flying the Air, treading

* A very celebrated Poet, in a beautiful Paragraph on this Subject, informs his Readers; That all Nature ſwarms with Life. In ſubterranean *Cells*, the Earth heaves with vital Motion. Even the hard *Stone*, in the very inmoſt Receſſes of its impenetrable Citadel, holds Multitudes of animated Inhabitants. The *Pulp* of mellow Fruit, and all the Productions of the Orchard, feed the inviſible Nations. Each *Liquid*, whether of acid Taſte, or milder Reliſh, abounds with various Forms of ſenſitive Exiſtence. Nor is the pure *Stream*, or tranſparent *Air*, without their Colonies of unſeen People.—In which Conſtitution of Things, we have a wonderful Inſtance, not only of the Divine Goodneſs to thoſe minute Beings, in giving them a *Capacity* for animal Gratifications; but of his tender Care for Mankind, in making them *imperceptible* to our Senſes.

——— Theſe, conceal'd
By the kind Art of forming Heav'n, eſcape
The groſſer Eye of Man: For, if the Worlds

In

treading the Ground, and gliding through the Paths of the Sea? For this moſt glorious Reaſon—That the eternal Sovereign may exerciſe his ſuperabundant Goodneſs; that his *Table* may be furniſhed, with Millions and Millions of *Gueſts*; that he may fill, every Hour, every Moment, their Mouths with Food, or their Hearts with Gladneſs.

BUT, what a ſmall Theatre are three or four *Elements*, for the Operations of JEHOVAH'S Bounty! His magnificent Liberality, ſcorns ſuch ſcanty Limits. If you aſk, Wherefore has He created *all Worlds*, and repleniſhed them with an unknown Multiplicity of Beings; riſing, one above another, in an endleſs Gradation of ſtill richer Endowments, and ſtill nobler Capacities? The Anſwer is—For the Manifeſtation of his own Glory, and eſpecially for the *Communication* of his inexhauſtible Beneficence *.



In Worlds inclos'd ſhould on his Senſes burſt;
From Cates ambroſial, and the nectar'd Bowl,
He'd turn abhorrent; and, in dead of Night,
When Silence ſleeps o'er all, be ſtunn'd with Noiſe.

THOMSON's *Summer*.

* A ſacred Writer, conſidering this delightful Subject; and confining his Obſervation, within the *narrow Limits* of his own Country; cries out, with a Mixture of Amazement and Gratitude; *How great is his Goodneſs, and how*

—The great Creator could propoſe no Advantage to Himſelf. His Bliſs is incapable of any Addition. "Before the Mountains were "brought forth, or ever the Earth and the "World were made," He was ſupremely happy, in his own independent and all-ſufficient Self. His grand Deſign therefore, in erecting ſo many ſtately Fabrics; and peopling them with ſo many Tribes of Inhabitants; was, To *tranſfuſe* his exuberant Kindneſs, and *impart* Felicityin all its Forms. Ten Thouſand Worlds, ſtocked with Ten thouſand times Ten thouſand Ranks, of ſenſitive and intelligent Exiſtence, are ſo many ſpacious Gardens; which, with Rivers of communicated Joy, this ever-flowing Fountain waters continually.

BOUNDLESS*, and (which raiſes our Idea of this Divine Principle, to the very higheſt Degree of Perfection) diſintereſted * Munificence! How

*how great is his Beauty!*—Who then can forbear being loſt in Wonder, and tranſported with Delight; when he extends his Survey, to thoſe infinitely more *copious Communications* of Divine Bounty; which, like ſalutary and refreſhing Streams, run through all Worlds; and make, not only the *little Valleys* of a ſingle Kingdom, but the Immenſity of Creation *laugh and ſing?* Zech. ix. 17.

** In this Senſe, *There is none good, but One, that is GOD.* None univerſally and eſſentially good. None, whoſe

How *inexpreſſibly amiable* is the bleſſed GOD, conſidered in this charming Light! Is it poſſible to conceive any Excellence, ſo adorable and lovely; as infinite Benevolence, guided by unerring Wiſdom, and exerting Almighty Power, on purpoſe to make a whole Univerſe happy?—O my Soul, what an *irreſiſtible Attractive* is here! What a moſt worthy Object, for thy moſt fervent Affection! Shall now every glittering Toy, become a Rival to this tranſcendently beneficent Being, and rob Him of thy Heart?—No. Let his all-creating Arm teach thee, to truſt in the Fulneſs of his ſufficiency:—Let his all-ſuperintending Eye incline thee, to acquieſce in the Diſpenſations of his Providence:—And let his Bounty; ſo freely vouchſafed; ſo amply diffuſed; induce thee to *love* Him, with all the Ardor of a grateful and admiring Soul: induce thee to *ſerve* Him, not with a joyleſs Awe, or ſlaviſh Dread, but with unfeigned Alacrity, and a delightful Complacency.

IF the Goodneſs of GOD is ſo admirably ſeen, in the Works of Nature, and the Favours of Providence; with what a noble Superiority,



whoſe Goodneſs extends itſelf, in an infinite *Variety* of Bleſſings, to *every* capable Object; or, who always diſpenſes his Favours, from the *ſole* Principle of *free* and diſintereſted Benevolence.

does it *even triumph*, in the *Myſtery* of *Redemption* *! Redemption, is the brighteſt Mirror, in which to contemplate this moſt lovely Attribute of the Deity. Other Gifts, are only as *Mites* from the Divine Treaſury; but Redemption opens, I had almoſt ſaid exhauſts, all the *Stores* of Indulgence and Grace. Herein, "GOD "*commendeth* his Love†:" not only manifeſts, but ſets it off, as it were, with every bright and grand Embelliſhment: manifeſts it in ſo ſtupendous

* In this, and in other Parts of the *Contemplations*, the Reader will obſerve; That the Attributes of the DEITY are repreſented, as ſhining, with more diſtinguiſhed Luſtre, in the Wonders of *Redemption*, than in the Works of *Creation*. If *ſuch* Remarks ſhould ſeem to be unprecedented, or to ſtand in Need of a Vindication; permit me to ſubjoin the Sentiments of a great Critic, equally verſed in *both* thoſe ſublime Theories.—"In a perfect Orator, He "ſays, *Tully* requires ſome Skill in the Nature of heavenly "Bodies; becauſe, his Mind will become more extenſive "and unconfined; and, when He deſcends to treat of "human Affairs, He will both think and write in a more "exalted and magnificent Manner. For the ſame Rea"ſon, that excellent Maſter would have recommended the "Study of thoſe great and glorious Myſteries, which "*Revelation* has diſcovered to Us; *to which the nobleſt* "*Parts of this Syſtem of the World are as much inferior, as* "*the Creature is leſs excellent than the Creator.*" *Spect.* Vol. VIII. N° 633.

† Rom. v. 8.

pendous a Manner, that it is beyond Parallel; beyond Thought; "above all Bleſſing and "Praiſe."—Was HE not thy *Son*, Everlaſting GOD, thy *only* Son; the Son of thy Boſom from eternal Ages; the higheſt Object of thy complacential Delight? Was not thy Love to this adorable Son, incomparably greater than the tendereſt Affection of *Any*, or the united Affections of *All*, mortal Parents? Was not the bleſſed JESUS more illuſtrious in Excellency, than all Angels; more exalted in Dignity, than all Heavens? Yet didſt thou reſign HIM, for poor Mortals; for vile Sinners!—Couldſt thou ſee him deſcend, from his Royal *Throne*; and take up his Abode, in the ſordid *Stable?* See him forego the *Homage* of the Seraphim; and ſtand expoſed to the reproachful *Indignities*, of an inſolent Rabble? See Him arraigned at the Bar, and ſentenced to Death; numbered with Malefactors, and nailed to the Gibbet; bathed in his own innocent Blood, and pouring out his Soul in Agonies of Sorrow?—Could the Father, the Father *himſelf*, with unknown Philanthropy *, ſay? "It ſhall, it ſhall, be ſo! My "Pity to rebellious Man pleads, and prevails. "Awake, therefore, O *Sword* †, edged with divine

* *Philanthropy*, that is, Loving-kindneſs to Man.

† Zech. xiii. 7.

" divine Wrath. Awake; and be ſheathed in " that *immaculate* Breaſt; pierce that *dearly be-* " *loved* Heart. I am content, that my Son " endure the Sharpneſs of Death, rather than " ſinful Mortals periſh for ever."—Incomprehenſible Love! May it henceforward, be the favourite Subject of my *Meditation*; more delightful to my muſing Mind, than Applauſe to the ambitious Ear! May it be the darling Theme of my *Diſcourſe*; ſweeter to my Tongue, than the Droppings of the Honeycomb to my Taſte! May it be my choiceſt *Comfort*, through all the Changes of Life; and my reviving *Cordial*, even in the laſt Extremities of Diſſolution itſelf!

A *PROPHET* contemplating, with a diſtant Survey, this unexampled Inſtance of Almighty Love, is wrapt into a *Tranſport* of *Devotion*. At a Loſs for proper Acknowledgments, he calls upon the whole Univerſe to aid his labouring Breaſt, and ſupply his Lack of Praiſe. *Sing melodiouſly, ye* vaulted *Heavens*; *exult, and even leap for Gladneſs, thou* cumberous *Earth*; *ye Mountains*, break your long Silence, and *burſt into Peals of loudeſt Acclamation* *; *for the*

* *Iſa.* xlix. 13.—I have not adhered to our common Tranſlation, but endeavoured to preſerve, ſomewhat more faith-

*the* LORD, by this precious Gift, and this great Salvation, *hath comforted his People.*—A *ſacred Hiſtorian* hath left it upon Record; that, at the firſt Exhibition of this raviſhing Scene, there was with the Angel, who brought the bleſſed Tidings, a Multitude of the heavenly Hoſt; praiſing GOD, and making the Concave of the Skies reſound with their Hallelujahs. At the Dawn of the Sun of Righteouſneſs, when He was beginning to riſe with Healing in his Wings, the *Morning Stars* ſang together, and all the *Sons* of *GOD* ſhouted for Joy.—And ſhall *Man*, whom this gracious Diſpenſation principally reſpects; ſhall *Man*, who is the Centre of all theſe gladdening Rays; ſhall He have

faithfully, the noble *Pathos*, and inimitable *Energy*, of the ſacred Original.—The Love of GOD, manifeſted in a Divine and dying Saviour, is a Bleſſing of ſuch inconceivable Richneſs; as muſt render all Acknowledgments *flat*, and all Encomiums *languid*. Yet, I think, the moſt poetical and moſt emphatical Celebration of that unſpeakable Inſtance of Goodneſs, is contained in this rapturous Exclamation of the Prophet. Which intimates, with a wonderful Majeſty of Sentiment, that even the whole Compaſs of the *inanimate Creation*; could it be ſenſible of the Benefit, and capable of Delight; would expreſs its *Gratitude*, in all theſe Demonſtrations of the moſt lively and exuberant Joy.

have no Heart to adore, no Anthem to celebrate, This

*Love without End, and without Meaſure Grace?*
MILT.

How *pure* is the State of the Sky, and how *clear* its Aſpect! Clearer than the limpid Stream; purer than the tranſparent Cryſtal; and more curiouſly fine, than the poliſhed Mirror. That *ſtately Cieling*; fretted with Gold, and ſtretched to an Extent of many Millions of Leagues; is not disfigured with a ſingle Flaw. That *azure Canopy*; embroidered with Stars, and ſpacious enough to form a Covering for unnumbered Worlds; is without the leaſt Spot or Wrinkle. —Yet this, even this, will ſcarce yield us, ſo much as a faint Repreſentation of the *Divine Purity*. GOD, is a GOD of matchleſs and tranſcendent Excellency. His Ways are Uprightneſs itſelf. His Counſels and Words are the very Sanctity of Wiſdom and of Truth. The *Laws*, which he has given to univerſal Nature; are exquiſitely contrived, and beyond all Poſſibility of Improvement. The *Precepts*, which He has appointed for the human Race; are a complete Summary, of all that is honourable in itſelf, and perfective of the rational Mind.—Not the leaſt *Overſight*, in planning a Series

Series of Events for all Futurity. Not the leaſt Mal-adminiſtration, in managing the Affairs of every Age, ſince Time began; and of every Nation, under the whole Heavens.—Pardon theſe diſparaging Expreſſions. A *negative* Perfection is far, far beneath thy Dignity, *O Thou moſt Higheſt* *: In all theſe Inſtances; in all thy

* *O Thou moſt Higheſt.*—This Expreſſion occurs more than once, in the Pſalms uſed by the Eſtabliſhed Church. It is, I think, one of thoſe *Beauties*; which, becauſe often exhibited, generally eſcape our Notice. It is a *Superlative* formed on a Superlative; and, though not ſtrictly conformable to grammatical Rules, is nobly ſuperior to them all.—The Language ſeems to be ſenſible of its own Deficiency: when the incomprehenſible JEHOVAH is addreſſed, or celebrated. Oppreſſed, as it were, with the Glories of the Subject, it labours after a *more emphatical* manner of Diction, than the ordinary Forms of Speech afford.—It is, if I rightly judge, one of thoſe daring and happy Peculiarities of a maſterly Genius, which Mr. POPE ſo finely deſcribes; and, while he deſcribes, exemplifies:

Great Wits ſometimes may *glorioufly offend*,
And *riſe* to *Faults* true Critics dare not mend;
From vulgar Bounds with brave Diſorder part,
And ſnatch a Grace beyond the Reach of Art.
*Eſſay on Criticiſm.*

St. *Paul's*—υλαχιςόλιρος ωαῦλων των αγιων—is a beautiful Paſſage of the like Nature. Which our Tranſlators have very

thy Acts, and all thy Attributes; Thou art not only holy, but "*glorious* in *Holineſs*."

So inconceivably holy is the LORD GOD of Hoſts, that He ſees *Defilement* even in the *Brightneſs* of the Firmament. The living Sapphire of the Heavens, before his Majeſty, loſes its Luſtre. *Yea, the Stars* (though the moſt pure and reſplendent Part of the Heavens) *are not pure in his Sight. How much leſs Man, who* in his fallen and depraved State, *is* but as *a Worm*, that crawls in the corrupted Carcaſe; *and the Son of Man, who*, by reaſon of his manifold actual Impurities, *is* too juſtly compared to *an Inſect*, that wallows amidſt Stench and Putrefaction * ?—Is there not then abundant Cauſe, for

very properly rendered; *Leſs than the leaſt of all Saints.*—His πολλῳ μαλλον χρεισσον is another Inſtance of the ſame Kind. But here the *Engliſh* Verſion fails. *Far better* is extremely *flaccid*, compared with the *nervous* Original. And I greatly queſtion, whether it is poſſible to tranſlate the Sentence, with equal Conciſeneſs, and with equal Spirit. See *Eph.* iii 8. *Phil.* i. 23.

* *Job* xxv. 5, 6. I ſubmit it to the Judgment of the Learned, Whether this is not the true Meaning of the Text.—It may not, perhaps, recommend itſelf to the *ſqueamiſhly nice* Critic; or to thoſe Perſons who dream of, I know not what, *Dignity* in our fallen Nature. But it ſeems, in Preference to every other Interpretation, *ſuitable* to the ſacred Context; and is far, far from being *injurious* to

for the moſt irreproachable and eminent of Mankind, to renounce all arrogant Pretenſions; to lay aſide every aſſuming Air; to take nothing but *Shame* and Confuſion to themſelves? A holy Prophet, and a holy Prince, felt ſuch humbling Impreſſions, from a Glimpſe of the uncreated Purity. *I abhor myſelf in Duſt and Aſhes* *, was the Declaration of the one: *I am a Man of unclean Lips* †, the Confeſſion of the other.—

to the Character of that apoſtate Race, which is "altogether become abominable," and "is as an unclean "Thing."—On this Suppoſition, there is not only an apparent, but a very ſtriking Contraſt, between the Purity of GOD, and the Pollution of Man. The *Purity* of the moſt high GOD, which outſhines the Moon, and eclipſes the Stars; the *Pollution* of degenerate Man, which, excluſive of a Saviour, would render him as loathſome to the all-ſeeing Eye, as the vileſt Vermin are in ours.—Without aſſigning this Senſe to the Paſſage, I cannot diſcern the Force of the *Antitheſis*, nor indeed the *Propriety* of the Sentiment. Worms, in the general, give us an Idea of *Meanneſs* and *Infirmity*; not of *Defilement* and *Impurity*. Unleſs they are Inſects, hatched amidſt Putrefaction, and conſidered in ſuch noiſome Circumſtances.—The two Words of the Original, רמה and תולעה are evidently uſed in this Signification, by *Moſes* and *Iſaiah*. By the former, to denote the Vermin, which devoured the *putrefied* Manna; by the latter, to expreſs the Reptiles, which ſwarm in the Body that ſees *Corruption*, *Exod.* xvi. 20. *Iſa.* xiv. 11.

* Job xlii. 6. † Iſa. vi. 5.

other.—Should not this teach us all, to adore the Divine Mercies, for that precious *purifying Fountain**; which was foretold from the Foundation of the World; but was opened at that awful Juncture, when knotty Whips tore the Fleſh; when ragged Thorns mangled the Temples; when ſharpened Nails cut freſh Sluices for the crimſon Current; when the Gaſh of the Spear compleated the dreadful Work, and *forthwith flowed there*, from the wounded Heart, *Blood and Water?*

ESPECIALLY, ſince GOD himſelf ſaw no Blemiſh in his *dear Son. He looketh to the Moon, and it ſhineth not:* yet his all-penetrating and jealous Eye, diſcerned nothing amiſs, nothing defective, in our glorious Redeemer. Nothing amiſs? He bore this moſt illuſtrious Teſtimony, concerning his holy Child JESUS: "In Him I am *pleaſed*; I am *well pleaſed*; I ac- "quieſce, with intire Complacency, and with "the higheſt Delight, in his Perſon; his Un- "dertaking; and the whole Execution of his "Office."—How ſhould this Thought, enliven our Hopes; while the other, mortifies our Pride?

* *In that Day there ſhall be a Fountain, opened to the Houſe of* David, *and to the Inhabitants of* Jeruſalem, *for Sin and Uncleanneſs.* Zech. xiii. 1.

Pride? Should not our Hearts ſpring within us, and even leap for Joy; at the repeated Aſſurance given us by Revelation, That ſuch a divinely excellent Perſon is our Mediator? What apparent Reaſon has every Believer, to adopt the bleſſed Virgin's Exclamation! "*My Soul* "*doth magnify the* LORD for his tranſcendent "Mercy; *and my Spirit rejoices,* not in wide ex- "tended Harveſts, waving over my fertile "Glebe*; not in Armies vanquiſhed, and leav- "ing the peculiar Treaſure of Nations for my "Spoil*; but in an infinitely richer, nobler "Bleſſing, even *in* GOD *my Saviour.*"—That a Perſon ſo ſublime and perfect, has vouchſafed to become my *Surety:* to give Himſelf for my *Ranſom,* in the World below; and act as my *Advocate,* in the Royal Preſence above: yea, to make *my* Recovery, the Reward of his Sufferings; *my* final Felicity, the Honour of his mediatorial Kingdom!

WHEN an innumerable Multitude † of Bodies, many of them more than a *Hundred Thou-*



* The inſpired Penman, from theſe Two Occaſions of diſtinguiſhed Joy, ſets forth the incomparably *greater Delight,* which ariſes from the Gift of a Saviour, and the Bleſſing of Redemption. *Iſa* ix. *ver.* 3. compared with *ver.* 6.

† This refers, not only to the Planets which paſs and repaſs about our Sun, but alſo to the other Planetary Worlds.

*ſand Miles* in Diameter *, are all ſet in Motion: —when the Orbits, in which they perform their periodical Revolutions, are extended at the Rate of ſeveral Hundreds of *Millions:*— when each has a *diſtinct* and ſeparate Sphere, for finiſhing his vaſt Circuit:—when no one knows, what it is to be cramped; but each moſt *freely expatiates*, in his unbounded Career: — when every one is placed, at ſuch an *immenſe Remove* from each other; that they appear to their reſpective Inhabitants, only as ſo many Spots of Light:—How aſtoniſhing muſt be the Expanſe, which yields *Room* for all thoſe mighty Globes, and their widely-diffuſed Operations! To what prodigious Lengths, did the Almighty Builder ſtretch his Line, when He marked out the ſtupendous Platform!—I wonder at ſuch an immeaſurable Extent. My very Thoughts are loſt, in this Abyſs of Space. But, be it known to Mortals; be it never forgot by Sinners; that, in all its moſt ſurpriſing Amplitude, it is *ſmall*, it

Worlds, which are ſuppoſed to attend the ſeveral fixed Stars.

* The Diameter of *Jupiter* is calculated at 130,650 Miles, while his Orbit is reckoned to conſiſt of 895,134,000. Which Computation, according to the Maxims of Aſtronomy, and the Laws of Proportion, may, as is taken for granted in the Contemplations, be applied to *other Planets* revolving round *other Suns*.

it is *ſcanty*, compared with the Bounty and the Mercy of its Maker.

HIS *Bounty* is abſolutely without Limits *, and without End. The moſt laviſh Generoſity cannot exhauſt, or even diminiſh, his Munificence. O! all ye Tribes of Men; or rather, all ye Claſſes of intelligent Creatures; ye are not ſtreightened in the *Liberality* of your ever-bleſſed Creator; be not ſtreightened in your own *Expectations*. "Open your Mouth wide, "and He ſhall fill it," with copious and continual Draughts from the Cup of Joy. Your GOD, on whom is your whole Dependence, is more than able; is more than willing; to "ſupply all your Need, according to his Riches "in Glory."—When the LORD JEHOVAH



* By *Bounty*, I mean, not the actual Exerciſe, or the ſenſible Effects, of this Excellency in the Deity. Theſe *are*, and always *muſt be*, through the immenſe Perfection of the Attribute, and the neceſſary Scantineſs of the Recipient, bounded. But, I would be underſtood, as ſpeaking of the Divine *Power*, and the Divine *Will*, to exert Divine Beneficence. Theſe can have no real, no imaginable limits. Theſe, after a Profuſion of Bleſſings, diſtributed to unnumbered Worlds, continued through unnumbered Ages, muſt *ſtill* have more to beſtow; for *ever* have more to beſtow; *infinitely* more to beſtow, than it is poſſible for Creation itſelf to receive.

is the Giver, and his Grace * the Gift; let your wiſhes be unbounded, and your Cravings inſatiable. All that created Beings can poſſibly *covet*, is but a very ſmall Pittance of that unknown Happineſs, which the Everlaſting Benefactor is ready to *beſtow*. Suppoſe every charitable Diſpoſition, which warms the Hearts of the human Race, added to thoſe more inlarged Affections, which glow in heavenly Boſoms; what were they all, even in their higheſt Exerciſe, compared with the Benignity of the Divine Nature?—Bleſs *me* then, Thou eternal Source of Love; bleſs *all* that reverence thy holy Name; according to thy own moſt profuſe Goodneſs. Whoſe great Prerogative it is, to diſdain all Meaſure. O! bleſs us, in proportion to that Grace; the Richneſs of which (unutterable by the Tongues of Men, and of Angels) was once *ſpoken* in the Groans, and *written* in the Wounds, of thy expiring Son!

SPACIOUS

* 2 *Cor.* ix. 8. *GOD is able to make* all *Grace* abound *towards you, that ye, having* all Sufficiency *in* all Things, *may* abound *to* every *good Work*.—How beautiful, and emphatical, is this Deſcription! Inferior to nothing, but that Extent of Ability, and thoſe Riches of Liberality, which it ſo eloquently celebrates. Does it not *exhauſt* all the Powers of Language; while it attempts to give us a *Specimen*, of the Munificence of the LORD?

SPACIOUS indeed are theſe Heavens! Where do they begin? Where do they end? What is their Extent? Can Angels anſwer my Queſtion? Have Angels travelled the vaſt Circuit? Can Angels meaſure the Bounds of Space? No; 'tis boundleſs, 'tis unknown, 'tis amazing all.—How charming then to reflect, That the *Mercy* of GOD is "greater than the Heavens;" is more extenſive than the Dimenſions of the Sky. Tranſporting Reflection! Let me indulge Thee once more*. Let me think over the delightful Diſplays of this lovely Attribute; and, while I admire the *Trophies* of forgiving Goodneſs, add one to the Number.—With what amiable and affecting Colours, is this repreſented in the *Parable* of the *Prodigal!* What could induce that



* *Once more* refers to Page 124, of *Reflections on a Flower-Garden.*—The following Pages, to the 197th, exhibit a *digreſſive* View of the Divine Mercy. I thought it proper to appriſe my Reader of this Excurſion; though, I hope, it will be needleſs to offer an Apology, for enlarging upon a Theme incomparably joyous. Who can complain of *Tedioufneſs*, while I ſpeak Conſolation to diſtreſſed, and Recovery to ruined Creatures? The Divine Mercy is the ſole Fountain of all our preſent and future Bleſſings. In Conformity to this benign Attribute, human Hopes ariſe, and human Felicity flows. Who, therefore, can be weary of *viewing* and *reviewing*; when the Lengths and Breadths of forgiving Grace, are the raviſhing Proſpect?

fooliſh Youth, to forſake his Father's Houſe? Had he not been tenderly cheriſhed by the good Parent; and loaded with Benefits, from his indulgent Hand? Were not the Reſtraints of parental Government, an eaſy Yoke? or rather, a *Preſervative* from *Ruin?* Notwithſtanding every endearing Obligation, he revolts from his Duty; and launches into ſuch ſcandalous Irregularities, as were diſhonourable to his Family, and deſtructive to himſelf. — When Neceſſity, not Choice, but ſharp Neceſſity drove him to a ſubmiſſive Return; does the injured Father ſtand aloof, or ſhut his Doors? Quite the Reverſe. He eſpies him, while he is yet a *great Way off*; and, the Moment he beholds the profligate Youth, He *has Compaſſion on Him.* His Bowels yearn; they "ſound like an Harp," touched with Notes divinely ſoft. He never once thinks of his ungracious Departure, and infamous Debaucheries. Pity, parental Pity, paſſes an Act of Oblivion; and, in one inſtant, cancels a Series of long-continued Provocations. — So ſtrong are the Workings of fatherly Affection; that he is almoſt impatient to embrace the naked and deſtitute Wretch. The Son's Pace is ſlow, *He aroſe and came*; the Father's is ſwift, He ſprung forth (aged as he was) and *ran.* And is there a ſingle Frown in his Brow, or one

one upbraiding Word on his Tongue?—Inſtead of loathing the ſordid Creature, or reproaching him for his odious Exceſſes; he *falls* on his *Neck*, claſps Him in his Arms, and hugs him to his Boſom. Inſtead of diſowning the riotous Spendthrift, or rejecting him for his undutiful Behaviour; He receives and welcomes Him with *Kiſſes* of Delight. He rejoices, at his Return from Extravagance and Vice; as he formerly rejoiced, on the Day of his Nativity.—When this Companion of Harlots opens his Mouth, *before he ſpeaks, the Father hears.* He interrupts him, in the midſt of his intended Speech. The Overflowings of his compaſſionate Heart can brook no Delay. He ſeems to be *uneaſy* himſelf, till he has made the afflicted Penitent *glad*, with the Aſſurance of his Acceptance, and the choiceſt of his Favours.—While the poor abaſhed Offender ſeeks nothing more, than not to be abhorred; he is thoroughly reconciled, and honoured before the whole Family. While he requeſts no other Indulgence, than only to be treated as the *meaneſt Servant*; he is cloathed with the *beſt Robe*; he is feaſted with the *fatted Calf*; he is careſſed as the deareſt of Children.—Was there ever ſo bright and winning a Picture, of the tendereſt Mercy; moſt freely vouchſafed, even to the

moſt unworthy of Creatures? Yet *thus*, my Soul; and *thus*, my Fellow-ſinner; will the LORD GOD of everlaſting Compaſſions receive us; if, ſenſible of our Miſery, and thirſting for Salvation, we turn to him through JESUS CHRIST.

*WHERE Sin has abounded*, ſays the Proclamation from the Court of Heaven, *Grace doth much more abound.—Manaſſeh* was a Monſter of Barbarity; for He cauſed his own Children to paſs through the Fire, and filled *Jeruſalem* with innocent Blood. *Manaſſeh* was an Adept in Iniquity; for He not only multiplied, and to an extravagant Degree, his own ſacrilegious Impieties; but He poiſoned the Principles, and perverted the Manners of his Subjects, *making them to do worſe than the* moſt deteſtable of the *Heathen* Idolaters *. Yet, through this ſuper-abundant Grace, He is humbled; He is reformed; and becomes a Child of forgiving Love, an Heir of immortal Glory.—Behold that bitter and bloody Perſecutor *Saul*; when, breathing out Threatenings †, and bent upon Slaughter,

* See 2 Chron. xxxiii.

† *Acts* ix. 1. Σαυλος ετι εμπνεων απειλης και φονε, *Saul yet breathing out Threatening and Slaughter.*—What a Repreſentation is here of a Mind, *mad* with *Rage*, and abandoned

Slaughter, he worried the Lambs, and put to Death the Diſciples of JESUS. Who, upon the Principles of human Judgment, would not have pronounced *Him* a Veſſel of Wrath, deſtined to unavoidable Damnation? Nay, would not have been ready to conclude; that, if there were heavier Chains, and a deeper Dungeon, in the World of Woe; they muſt ſurely be reſerved, for ſuch an implacable Enemy of true Godlineſs? Yet, (admire, and adore, the inexhauſtible Treaſures of Grace!) this *Saul*, is admitted

doned to the fierceſt Extremes of Barbarity! I ſcarce know, whether I am more *ſhocked* at the Perſecutor's ſavage Diſpoſition, or *charmed* with the Evangeliſt's lively Deſcription.—The Adverb ἔτι ſeems referable to Chap. viii. Ver. 3. and has, in this Connexion, a peculiar Force. The Havock he had committed, the inoffenſive Families he had *already* ruined, were not ſufficient to aſſuage his vengeful Spirit. They were only a *Taſte*; which, inſtead of glutting the Blood-hound, made him more cloſely purſue the Track, and more eagerly pant for Deſtruction. He is *ſtill* athirſt for Violence and Murder. So eager and inſatiable is his Thirſt, that he even *breathes out* Threatening and Slaughter. His Words are Spears and Arrows, and his Tongue a ſharp Sword. 'Tis as natural for him to *menace* the Chriſtians, as to breathe the Air.—Nay, they *bleed* every Hour, every Moment, in the Purpoſes of his rancorous Heart. It is only owing to Want of Power, that every Syllable he utters, every Breath he draws, does not deal about Deaths, and cauſe ſome of the innocent Diſciples to fall.

admitted into the goodly Fellowſhip of the Prophets; is numbered with the noble Army of Martyrs; and makes a diſtinguiſhed Figure, among the glorious Company of the Apoſtles.— The *Corinthians*, were flagitious even to a Proverb. Some of them wallowed in ſuch abominable Vices, and habituated themſelves to ſuch outrageous Acts of Injuſtice, as were a Reproach to human Nature. Yet, even theſe Sons of Violence, and Slaves of Senſuality, "were waſhed; were ſanctified; were juſtified*." *Waſhed*, in the precious Blood of a dying Redeemer; *ſanctified*, by the powerful Operations of the Bleſſed Spirit; *juſtified*, through the infinitely tender Mercies of a gracious GOD. Thoſe, who were once the Burden of the Earth, are now the Joy of Heaven, and the Delight of Angels.

THERE is another Inſtance in Scripture, which moſt loudly publiſhes that ſweeteſt of the Divine Names, *The LORD, the LORD GOD, merciful and gracious, long-ſuffering, and abundant in Goodneſs and Truth; keeping Mercy for Thouſands, forgiving Iniquity, Tranſgreſſion, and Sin* †. An Inſtance this, which exceeds all the former; which exceeds whatever can be imagined;

* 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10, 11. † Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7.

imagined; which if I was to forget, the very Stones might cry out, and ſound it in my Ears. I mean the Caſe of thoſe Sinners, who murdered the *Prince* of *Peace*, and LORD of Glory.—Theſe Men, could ſcarce have the Shadow of an Excuſe for their Crime; hardly a Circumſtance, to extenuate their Guilt. They were well acquainted with his exemplary Converſation; they had often heard his heavenly Doctrines; they were almoſt daily Spectators of his unequalled Miracles. They therefore had all poſſible Reaſon to *honour* Him, as the moſt illuſtrious of Beings; and to *receive* his Goſpel, as the moſt ineſtimable of Bleſſings. Yet, notwithſtanding all theſe engaging Motives to love Him, even above their own Lives; they ſeize his Perſon; aſperſe his Character; drag him before a heathen Tribunal; and extort a Sentence of Death, againſt Innocence and Holineſs itſelf. Never was the *vileſt Slave*, ſo contumeliouſly abuſed; nor the moſt *execrable Malefactor*, ſo barbarouſly executed. The Sun was confounded at the ſhocking Scene; and one cannot but wonder, how the avenging Lightnings could with-hold their Flaſhes. The Earth trembled at the horrid Deed; and why, why did it not cleave aſunder, and open a Paſſage, for ſuch Blood-thirſty Miſcreants, into the nether-

nethermoſt Hell? Shall *Theſe* ever hope to obtain Forgiveneſs, from the righteous Judge? Shall not *Theſe* be conſigned over to inexorable Wrath, and the ſevereſt Torments?—O the miraculous Effects of Divine Grace! O the triumphant Goodneſs of GOD our Saviour! Many, even of *theſe* impious Wretches, at the Deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt, were convinced of their miſerable State; were wounded with penitential Remorſe; fled to the Sanctuary of the Croſs; had their Pardon ratified by the baptiſmal Seal; and, continuing in the Apoſtles Doctrine, were made Partakers of the Kingdom of Heaven. Where they now ſhine, as ſo many everlaſting *Monuments* of moſt diſtinguiſhed *Mercy*; and receive Beatitude paſt Utterance, from that very Redeemer, whom once "with wicked Hands they crucified and ſlew."

WELL might the Prophet cry out, with a pleaſing Amazement; "Who is a GOD like "unto Thee, that pardoneth Iniquity, and "paſſeth by Tranſgreſſion*!"—Let all Fleſh know aſſuredly; let all Fleſh rejoice greatly; That with the LORD there is *ſuch Mercy*, and with his CHRIST *ſuch plentiful Redemption*.—And O! for the Voice of an Arch-Angel, to circulate the Glad-Tidings through the Univerſe. That

* Mic. vii. 18.

That the *American* Savage, as well as the *European* Sage, may learn the *exceeding Riches of Grace* in Chriſt. Through whoſe infinitely ſatisfying Propitiation, all Manner of Sin, Barbarity, and Blaſphemy, are freely forgiven unto Men.

WHAT a grand, and majeſtic *Dome*, is the Sky! Where are the *Pillars*, which ſupport the ſtately Concave? What Art, moſt exactly true, balanced the Preſſure? What Props, of inſuperable Strength, ſuſtain the Weight? How is that immeaſurable Arch *upheld*, unſhaken and unimpaired; while ſo many Generations of buſy Mortals, have *ſunk* and diſappeared, as Bubbles upon the Stream?—If thoſe Stars are of ſuch an amazing Bulk; how are they alſo *faſtened*, in their lofty Situation? By what Miracle in Mechanics, are ſo many Thouſands of ponderous Orbs, kept from falling upon our Heads; kept from daſhing, both the World to Pieces, and its Inhabitants to Death? Are they hung in golden, or adamantine, Chains? Reſt they their enormous Load, on Rocks of Marble, or Columns of Braſs?—No; they are *pendulous* in fluid Æther. Yet, are more immoveably *fixed*, than if the everlaſting Mountains lent their Foreſts, for an Axle-Tree; or their

their Ridges, for a Baſis. The Almighty Architect *ſtretches out the North*, and its whole ſtarry Train, *over the empty Place*. He *hangs the Earth*, and all the ethereal Globes, *upon nothing* *. Yet are their Foundations laid ſo ſure, that they can "never be moved at any "Time."

No unfit Repreſentation, to the *ſincere* Chriſtian, of his *final* Perſeverance †: ſuch as points out

* Job xxvi. 7.

† With Regard to the *final Perſeverance* of the true Believer; I am ſenſible, this Point is not a little controverted.—The Sentiments, which follow, are *my* ſtedfaſt Belief. It is by no Means proper, in a Work of this Nature, to enter upon a Diſcuſſion of the Subject. Neither have I Room, ſo much as to hint, what might be urged for its Support.—Let my Reader obſerve, that I am far from delivering it, as eſſential to Chriſtianity, or neceſſary to Salvation. Millions, of the very contrary Conviction, are, I doubt not, high in the Favour of GOD; and in a growing Meetneſs for his heavenly Kingdom. As I blame none for *rejecting*, none, I hope, will be offended with me for *eſpouſing*, this particular Doctrine. —To be of different Opinions, at leaſt in ſome inferior Inſtances, ſeems an unavoidable Conſequence of our preſent State: where *Ignorance*, in Part, cleaves to the wiſeſt Minds; and *Prejudice* eaſily beſets the moſt impartial Judgments. This may turn to our common Advantage; and afford Room for the Diſplay and Exerciſe of thoſe *healing* Virtues, Moderation, Meekneſs, and Forbearance.—Let me only be permitted to aſk, whether this Tenet

out the Cauſe, which effects it; and conſtitutes the Pledge, which aſcertains it.—His Nature is all enfeebled. He is not able, of himſelf, to think a good Thought. He has no *viſible* Safeguard, nor any Sufficiency of his *own*. And yet, whole Legions of formidable Enemies, are in a Confederacy to compaſs his Ruin. The *World*, lays unnumbered Snares for his Feet: the *Devil*, is inceſſantly urging the Siege, by a Multitude of fiery Darts, or wily Temptations: the *Fleſh*, like a perfidious Inmate, under Colour of Friendſhip, and a ſpecious Pretence of Pleaſure,

Tenet does not evidently tend to eſtabliſh the *Comfort* of the Chriſtian, and to magnify the *Fidelity* of GOD our Saviour? Whether, far from countenancing Sloth, or encouraging Remiſſneſs, to *know* that our Labour ſhall not be in vain, is not the moſt prevailing Inducement to *abound* in the Work of the LORD? 1 *Cor.* xv. 58.

Is any One inclined to examine the Reaſons, which made the Author a Proſelyte to this Perſuaſion? He may find them diſplayed in the Memorial, delivered by ſeveral ſelect and eminent Divines of the Church of *England*, at the renowned Synod of *Dordt* — (See *Acta Synod. Dordrech.* Par. II. Page 246. of the *Latin* Edition, publiſhed in a ſingle Quarto Volume.)—Thoſe, who have no Opportunity of conſulting the Memoirs of that venerable Aſſembly; I would refer to the Works of the indefatigable and very learned *Turretin*, or to thoſe of the candid and elegant *Witſius*.—Turret. Tom. II. Q. xvi. Witſ. Oecon. Lib. III. Cap. xiii.

The

Pleaſure, is always forward to betray his Integrity.—But, amidſt all theſe threatening Circumſtances, of perſonal Weakneſs, and imminent Danger, an inviſible Aid is his Defence. "*I will uphold thee*, ſays the bleſſed GOD, "*with the Right Hand of my Righteouſneſs**." Comfortable Truth! The Arm, which fixes the Stars in their Orders, and guides the Planets in their Courſe, is ſtretched out to preſerve the Heirs of Salvation. "—*My Sheep*, adds the "great Redeemer, *are mine*; *and they ſhall never* "*periſh*;

The lateſt and fulleſt View of the Point, which I ever remember to have met with, in any of our *Engliſh* Writers, is in the *Lime-ſtreet Lectures*. Which are a Defence of ſeveral moſt important Doctrines of the Goſpel, and contained in two Octavo Volumes; the united Labours of *nine* modern Divines; moſt of whom, are *well* known to the World by their *other* evangelical and uſeful Writings. In thoſe Lectures, the final Perſeverance of the Saints, is very particularly ſtated; and, to *my* Apprehenſion at leaſt, moſt ſatisfactorily proved. The Arguments, uſually urged againſt it, are impartially conſidered; and I cannot but think (with all due Deference to the Judgment of others) unanſwerably confuted.

And here (not to ſwell this note any farther) I ſhall only juſt hint, that the judicious *Hooker* (an Authority, perhaps, as weighty and unexceptionable as any that can well be produced) gives a *ſolemn Atteſtation* to this Tenet, in a ſhort Diſcourſe on the Perpetuity of Faith, ſubjoined to his *Eccleſiaſtical Polity*. Fol. Edit.

* Iſa. xli. 10.

'*periſh*; *neither ſhall any pluck them out of my* '*Hand**." What Words are theſe! And did hey come from HIM, who hath all Power in Heaven, and on Earth? And were they ſpoke o the weakeſt of the Flock; to every unfeigned ?ollower of the great Shepherd? Then, Omnipotence itſelf muſt be *vanquiſhed*; before they :an be *deſtroyed*, either by the Seductions of Fraud, or the Aſſaults of Violence.

IF you aſk therefore, What Security we have, of enduring to the End, and continuing faithful unto Death?—The very *ſame* that eſtabliſhes the Heavens, and ſettles the Ordinances of the Univerſe. Can *theſe* be thrown into Confuſion†? Then, may the true Believer draw back unto Perdition. Can the Sun be diſlodged from his Sphere, and ruſh lawleſly through the Sky? Then, and then only, can the Faith of GOD'S Elect ‡ be *finally* overthrown.—Be of good Courage then, my Soul; rely on thoſe Divine Succours, which are ſo ſolemnly ſtipulated, ſo faithfully promiſed. Though thy Grace be languid, as the glimmering Spark; though the Overflowings of Corruption, threaten it with total Extinction; yet, ſince the great JEHOVAH has undertaken to cheriſh the dim



* John x. 28. † Jer. xxxi. 35, 36. ‡ Tit. i. 2.

Principle, " many Waters cannot quench it, " nor all Floods drown it." Nay, tho' it were feeble as the *ſmoking Flax**, Goodneſs and Faithfulneſs ſtand engaged, to augment the Heat; to raiſe the Fire, and feed the Flame; till it beam forth, a Lamp of immortal Glory, in the Heavens.

As

* The *Tenderneſs* and *Faithfulneſs* of GOD to his People, are finely pictured by the Prophet *Iſaiah*, Chap. xlii. Ver. 3. Which Paſſage, becauſe of its rich Conſolation, and uncommon Beauty, is deſervedly adopted by St. *Matthew*, and ingrafted into the Syſtem of evangelical Truths.—*He will not* himſelf *break*, nor ſuffer to be broken by any other, *the bruiſed Reed*; *nor quench the ſmoking Flax*. Was it poſſible, to have choſen two more delicate, and expreſſive Repreſentations?—Could any Image, be more ſignificant of a very infirm, and enfeebled *Faith*; than the flexile *Reed*, that bends before every Wind? Which, beſides its natural Weakneſs, is made abundantly weaker by being *bruiſed*: and ſo, is ready to fall in Pieces of itſelf.—Or could any Thing, with a more pathetical Exactneſs, deſcribe the extreme Imbecility, of that other Principle of the Divine Life, *Love*? The State of the *Flax*, juſt beginning to burn, is liable to be put out by the leaſt Blaſt: more liable ſtill, is the *Wick* of the Lamp, when it is not ſo much as kindled into a glimmering Flame, but only *breathing Smoke*, and uncertain whether it ſhall take Fire or no.—Yet true Faith, and heavenly Love, though ſubſiſting amidſt ſuch pitiable Infirmities, will not be abandoned by their great Author; ſhall not be extinguiſhed by any Temptations; but be maintained, invigorated, and made finally triumphant. *Matt.* xii. 20.

As to the *Faithfulneſs* of a covenanting GOD, this may be emblematically ſeen, in the Stability of the heavenly Bodies, and the Perpetuity of their Motions*.—Thoſe that are *fixed* or *ſtationary*, continue unalterable in their grand Elevations. No injurious Shocks; no Violence of conflicting Elements; are able to diſplace thoſe everlaſting Hinges, on which dependent Worlds revolve. Through the whole Flight of Time, they recede not, ſo much as a Hair's Breadth, from the preciſe central Point of their reſpective Syſtems. — While the *Erratic* or *Planetary*, perform their prodigious Stages, without any Intermiſſion, or the leaſt Embarraſſment. How ſoon, and how eaſily, is the moſt finiſhed Piece of human Machinery diſconcerted! But all the celeſtial Movements, are ſo nicely adjuſted; all their Operations, ſo critically proportioned; and their mutual Dependencies, ſo ſtrongly connected; that they prolong their beneficial Courſes, throughout all Ages.—While *mighty Cities* are overwhelmed with Ruin, and their very Names loſt in Oblivion: While *vaſt Empires* are ſwept from their Foundations, and leave not ſo much as a ſhadowy Trace of their antient Magnificence: While *all terreſtrial*



* Pſal. cxix. 89, 90.

Things are ſubject to Viciſſitude, and fluctuating in Uncertainty: *Theſe* are permanent in their Duration. *Theſe* are invariable in their Functions. "Not one faileth."—Who doubts the conſtant Succeſſion, of Day and Night; or the regular Returns, of Summer and Winter? And why, O! why ſhall we doubt the *Veracity* of GOD, or diſtruſt the *Accompliſhment* of his holy Word? Can the Ordinances of Heaven depart? Then only can GOD forget to be gracious; or neglect the Performance of his Promiſe.—Nay, our LORD gives us yet firmer Ground of Affiance. He affords us a ſurer Bottom for our Faith, than the *fundamental Laws* of the Univerſe. *Heaven and Earth*, He ſays, *ſhall paſs away*; *but my Words ſhall not*, in a ſingle Inſtance, or in one Tittle of their Import, *paſs away*. No: his ſacred Word, whatever may obſtruct it; whoever may oppoſe it; ſhall be fulfilled to the very uttermoſt.

O powerful Word! How aſtoniſhing is its Efficacy! When this Word was iſſued forth, a thouſand Worlds emerged out of nothing. Should the mighty Orders be repeated, a thouſand more would ſpring into Exiſtence. By this Word, the vaſt Syſtem of created Things is *upheld*, in conſtant and immutable Perfection. Should it give command, or ceaſe to exert its Energy;

Energy; the univerſal Frame would be diſſolved, and all Nature revert to her original Chaos. And this very Word is *pledged* for the Safety, the Comfort, the Happineſs of the Godly. This inviolable, this Almighty Word, *ſpeaks* in all the Promiſes of the Goſpel.—How ſtrangely infatuated are our Souls, that we ſhould value it ſo little! What Infidels are we in fact, that we ſhould depend upon it no more! Did it *create*, whatever has a Being; and ſhall it not *work* Faith, in our Breaſts? Do unnumbered Worlds, owe their Support to this Word; and ſhall it not be ſufficient, to buoy up our Souls in Troubles, or eſtabliſh them in Trials? Is it the *Life* of the Univerſe, and ſhall it be a *dead* Letter to Mankind?

IF I wiſh to be heard, when I implore heavenly Bleſſings; is not *this Privilege* moſt clearly made over to my Enjoyment, in that well-known Text, "Aſk, and it ſhall be given "you*?"—If I long for the Eternal Comforter, to dwell in my Heart, and ſanctify my Nature; have I not an apparent Title to this *high Prerogative*, conferred in that ſweet aſſertive Interrogation; "How much more ſhall your hea-"venly Father, give the Holy Spirit to thoſe "that aſk him†?"—If I earneſtly covet the

 ineſti-

* Matt. vii. 7. † Luke xi. 13.

ineſtimable Treaſures, that are compriſed in the great IMMANUEL's Mediation; can I have a firmer Claim to the *noble Portion*, than is granted in that moſt precious Scripture; "Him "that cometh to Me, I will in no-wiſe caſt "out *?"—What Aſſurance, of being intereſted in theſe unſpeakable Mercies, would I deſire? What *Form* of *Conveyance*; what *Deed* of *Settlement*; were it left to my own Option, ſhould I chooſe? Here is the Word of a King; the King immortal and inviſible; all whoſe Declarations † are Truth itſelf.—If a Monarch beſtows Immunities on a Body of Men, and confirm them by an authentic Charter; no one controverts, no one queſtions, their Right to the Royal Favours. And why ſhould we ſuſpect the *Validity* of thoſe glorious Grants, which are made by the everlaſting Sovereign of Nature; which He has alſo *ratified* by an Oath, and *ſealed* with the Blood of his Son?—Corporations may be diſfranchiſed, and Charters revoked. Even Mountains may be removed, and Stars drop from their Spheres. But a Tenure,

* John vi. 37.

† ——— If *theſe* fail,
The pillar'd Firmament is Rottenneſs,
And Earth's Baſe built on Stubble.
MILT. *Comus.*

Tenure, founded on the Divine Promiſe, is unalienably *ſecure*; is *laſting*, as Eternity itſelf.

WE have endeavoured to ſpell a *Syllable* of the eternal Name, in the ancient Manuſcript of the Sky. We have catched a *Glympſe* of the Almighty's Glory, from the Luſtre of innumerable Stars. But, would we behold all his Excellencies, pourtrayed in *full* Perfection; and drawn to the very Life; let us attentively conſider the REDEEMER.—I obſerve, there are ſome Parts of the Firmament, in which the Stars ſeem, as it were, to *cluſter*. They are ſown thicker, they lie cloſer, than uſual; and ſtrike the Eye with redoubled Splendor. Like the Jewels on a Crown, they mingle their Beams; and reflect an Increaſe of Brilliancy, on each other.—Is there not ſuch an Aſſemblage, ſuch a *Conſtellation* of the Divine Honours, moſt amiably effulgent in the bleſſed JESUS?

DOES not infinite *Wiſdom* * ſhine, with ſurpaſſing Brightneſs, in CHRIST? To the Making of a World, there was no Obſtacle; but to the Saving of Man, there ſeemed to be unſurmountable Bars. If the Rebel is ſuffered to eſcape; where is the *inflexible Juſtice*, which



* See the next Note.

denounces "Death as the Wages of Sin?" If the Offender is thoroughly pardoned; where is the *inviolable Veracity*, which has ſolemnly declared, "The Soul that ſinneth, ſhall die?" Theſe awful Attributes are ſet in terrible Array; and, like an impenetrable Battalion, oppoſe the Salvation of apoſtate Mankind. Who can ſuggeſt a Method to *abſolve* the traiterous Race; yet vindicate the Honours of Almighty Sovereignty? This is an Intricacy, which, the moſt exalted of finite Intelligences, are unable to clear.—But, behold the *unſearchable Secret* revealed! revealed in the wonderful Redemption, accompliſhed by a dying Saviour! So plainly revealed, that "He who runs may read;" and even *Babes* underſtand, what Minds of the deepeſt Penetration could not contrive.—The Son of GOD, taking our Nature, obeys the Law, and undergoes Death, in our Stead. By this means, the threatened *Curſe* is executed, in all its Rigour; and free *Grace* is exerciſed, in all its Riches. Juſtice maintains her Rights, and, with a ſteady Hand, adminiſters impartial Vengeance; while Mercy diſpenſes her Pardons, and welcomes the repentant Criminal into the tendereſt Embraces. Hereby, the ſeemingly thwarting Attributes are reconciled. The Sinner is ſaved, not only in *full Conſiſtence*, with th

the Honour of the ſupreme Perfections; but to the moſt *illuſtrious Manifeſtation* of them all.

WHERE does the Divine *Power* * ſo ſignally exert itſelf, as in the Croſs of CHRIST, and in the Conqueſts of Grace?—Our LORD, in his loweſt State of Humiliation, gained a more glorious Victory; than when, through the dividing Sea, and the waſte howling Wilderneſs, "He rode upon his Chariots and Horſes of "Salvation." When his Hands were riveted, with Irons, to the bloody Tree; He diſarmed Death of its Sting, and plucked the Prey from the Jaws of Hell. Then, even then, while he was crucified in *Weakneſs*, He vanquiſhed the *ſtrong Man*, and ſubdued our moſt formidable Enemies. Even then, he ſpoiled Principalities; triumphed over the Powers of Darkneſs; and led Captivity captive.—Now he is exalted to his heavenly Throne, with what a prevailing Efficacy does his Grace go forth, "conquering, "and to conquer!"—By this, the *Slaves* of Sin are

* CHRIST, *the Wiſdom of GOD, and the Power of GOD.* 1 Cor. i. 24.—*To the Intent that now, unto the Principalities and Powers in heavenly Places, might be known by the Church* (by the amazing Contrivance, and Accompliſhment of its Redemption) *the* deep, extenſive, and (πολυποικιλος) *greatly diverſified Wiſdom of GOD.* Eph. iii. 10.

are reſcued from their Bondage, and reſtored to the *Liberty* of Righteouſneſs. By this, depraved Wretches, whoſe Appetites were *ſenſual*, and their Diſpoſitions *deviliſh*; are not only renewed, but renewed after the Image of GOD, and made Partakers of a *Divine* Nature. Millions, Millions of loſt Creatures are ſnatched, by the Interpoſition of Grace, like *Brands* from the Burning; and, tranſlated into everlaſting Manſions, ſhine brighter than the *Stars*, ſhine bright as the *Sun*, in the Kingdom of their Father.

WOULD you then ſee an incomparably more bright Diſplay of the Divine Excellence, than the unſpotted Firmament, the Spangles of Heaven, or the golden Fountain of Day exhibit? Contemplate JESUS of *Nazareth*. He is the Brightneſs of his Father's Glory, and the expreſs Image of his Perſon. In his immaculate Nature; in his heavenly Tempers; in his moſt holy Life; the *moral Perfections* of the Deity are repreſented, to the higheſt Advantage *.— Hark! how *Mercy*, with her charming Voice, ſpeaks in all He utters. See! how *Benevolence* pours

* In this Senſe, that Saying of our LORD is eminently true, *He that hath ſeen ME, hath ſeen the FATHER.* John xiv. 9.

pours her choiceſt Stores, in all He does. Did ever *Compaſſion* look ſo amiably ſoft, as in thoſe pitying Tears; which ſwelled his Eyes, and trickled down his Cheeks, to bedew the Rancour of his inveterate Enemies?—Was it poſſible for *Patience* to aſſume a Form ſo lovely; as that ſweetly-winning Conduct, which bore the Contradiction of Sinners? Which intreated the Obſtinate, to be reconciled; beſought the Guilty, not to die?—In other Things, we may find ſome *ſcattered* Rays of JEHOVAH's Glory; but in CHRIST they are all collected and united. In CHRIST, they beam forth, with the ſtrongeſt Radiance, with the moſt delightful Effulgence. *Out of Sion*, and in *Sion*'s great Redeemer, *hath GOD appeared in perfect Beauty.*

SEARCH then, my Soul, above all other Purſuits, ſearch the Records of redeeming Love. Let theſe be the principal Objects of thy Study. Here employ thyſelf, with the moſt unwearied Aſſiduity.—*In theſe are hid all the Treaſures of Wiſdom and Knowledge*. Such Wiſdom*; as charms

* *Coloſſ.* ii. 3.—Not a mean Degree, but a *Treaſure*; not one Treaſure, but *many*; not many only, but *all* Treaſures, of true Wiſdom, and ſaving Knowledge; are in CHRIST, and his glorious Goſpel.—The tranſcendent *Excellency* of thoſe Treaſures ſeems to be finely intimated,

charms and aſtoniſhes the very Angels: Engages their cloſeſt Attention, and fills them with the deepeſt Adoration *. *Such Knowledge*; as qualifies the Poſſeſſor, if not for Offices of Dignity on Earth, yet for the moſt honourable Ad-

mated, in that other Expreſſion αποκεκρυφοι, *hid*; (which may be interpreted by the *Hebrew* מטמונים, *Job* iii. 21.) *laid up*, with the utmoſt Care, and the greateſt Safety. Not left at all Adventures, to be ſtumbled upon, by every giddy Wanderer; or to fall into the Arms of the yawning Sluggard; but, like Jewels of the brighteſt Luſtre, or Riches of the higheſt Value, *kept in Store* to adorn and reward the diligent Searcher.

* This, I believe, is the *Import* of the Apoſtle's Language, though it is not a *literal* Tranſlation of εις α επιθυμουσιν αγγελοι παρακυψαι. 1 *Pet.* i. 12.—I never had ſuch a lively Apprehenſion of the beautiful Significancy of the laſt Word, as when I have attended a Diſſection of ſome Part of the animal Body. In order to diſcern the *Minutiæ* of the admirable Frame; the latent Wonders of Art and Mechaniſm; the Eye is ſo ſharpened, and its Application ſo *intenſely bended*, as gives a very juſt *experimental* Comment on that expreſſive Phraſe, παρακυψαι.—With ſuch earneſt Attention, is the everlaſting Goſpel contemplated, by the *Angelic* Orders! How much more, if it were poſſible, does it deſerve the devout and inceſſant Conſideration of *human* Minds? Since by *them*, it is not only to be ſpeculated, as a bright and raviſhing Diſplay of the Divine Attributes; but to be appli.d to their fallen Nature, as a moſt benign Scheme of *recovering* Grace; as the ſure and only Method of obtaining Life and Immortality.

Advancements in the Kingdom of Heaven. Diſunited from which Knowledge, all Application is but elaborate Impertinence; and all Science, no better than pompous Ignorance.—Theſe Records contain the faultleſs Model of Duty, and the nobleſt Motives to Obedience. Nothing ſo powerful, to work a lively Faith, and a joyful Hope; as an attentive Conſideration of our LORD's unutterable Merits. Nothing ſo ſovereign, to antidote the peſtilential Influence of the World, and deliver our Affections from a Slavery to ignoble Objects; as an habitual Remembrance of his extreme Agonies. The genuine, the ever-fruitful *Source* of all *Morality*, is the unfeigned Love of CHRIST; and the Croſs, the CROSS, is the appointed * *Altar*, from which we may fetch a Coal †, to inkindle this ſacred Fire.

*BEHOLD*, therefore, *the Man*; the matchleſs and ſtupendous Man; whoſe Practice was a Pattern of the moſt exalted Virtue, and his Perſon the Mirror of every Divine Perfection. Examine

* *And I*, ſays our LORD, *if I be lifted up from the Earth*, and extended on the Croſs, *will draw all Men unto me:* will give ſuch a rich and tranſcendent Diſplay of *my* Love, as ſhall conſtitute the moſt powerful and prevailing Attractive of *theirs*. *John* xii. 32.

† Alluding to *Iſaiah* vi. 6.

Examine the Memoirs of his heavenly Temper, and exemplary Converſation. Contemplate that *Choir* of *Graces*, which were aſſociated in his Mind, and ſhed the higheſt Luſtre on all his Actions. Familiarize to thy Thoughts his inſtructive Diſcourſes, and enter into the very Spirit of his refined Doctrines. That the Graces may be transfuſed into thy Breaſt, and the Doctrines tranſcribed in thy Life.—Follow Him to *Calvary*'s horrid Eminence; to *Calvary*'s fatal Cataſtrophe. Where Innocence, Dignity, and Merit, were *made perfect through Sufferings*: each ſhining, with all poſſible Splendor, through the tragical Scene; ſomewhat like his own radiant Bow, then glowing with the greateſt Beauty, when appearing on the darkeſt Cloud.—Be thy moſt conſtant Attention fixed, on that lovely and ſorrowful Spectacle. Behold the ſpotleſs Victim, nailed to the Tree, and ſtabbed to the Heart. Hear Him pouring out Prayers, for his Murderers; before He poured out his Soul, for Tranſgreſſors. See the Wounds, that ſtream with Forgiveneſs, and *bleed Balm* for a diſtempered World. O! ſee the Juſtice of the Almighty and his Goodneſs; his Mercy and his Vengeance; every *tremendous* and *gracious* Attribute manifeſted; manifeſted with inexpreſ-

ſible

ſible Glory, in that moſt *ignominious*, yet *grandeſt*, of Tranſactions.

SINCE GOD is ſo inconceivably great, as theſe his marvellous Works declare;

*Since the great Sov'reign ſends Ten thouſand Worlds,*
*To tell us, He reſides above them all,*
*In Glory's unapproachable Receſs* *;

how can We forbear haſtening, with *Moſes*, bowing Ourſelves to the Earth, and worſhipping?

O! what an honourable, as well as advantageous Employ, is Prayer!—*Advantageous.* By Prayer, We cultivate that improving Correſpondence

* For this *Quotation*, and ſeveral valuable *Hints*, I acknowledge myſelf indebted to thoſe beautiful and ſublime Poems, intituled *Night-Thoughts.*—Of which I ſhall only ſay, That I receive freſh Pleaſure, and richer Improvement, from every renewed Peruſal. And, I think, I ſhall have Reaſon to bleſs the indulgent Beſtower of all Wiſdom, for thoſe inſtructive and animating Compoſitions, even in my laſt Moments. Than which, nothing can more emphatically ſpeak their *ſuperior Excellence*, nor give a more ſolid Satisfaction to their worthy Author.—Happy ſhould I think myſelf, if theſe little Sketches of contemplative Devotion, might be honoured with the *moſt inferior* Degree of the ſame Succeſs. Might receive a Teſtimony, not from the Voice of Fame, but from the dying Lips of ſome edified Chriſtian.

ſpondence with JEHOVAH, We carry on that gladdening Intercourſe with his SPIRIT, which muſt begin Here, in order to be completed in Eternity.—*Honourable.* By Prayer, we have Acceſs to that mighty Potentate; whoſe Sceptre ſways univerſal Nature, and whoſe rich Regalia fill the Skies with Luſtre. Prayer, places us in his Preſence-Chamber; while "the Blood of Sprinkling," procures us a gracious Audience.

SHALL I then *bluſh* to be found proſtrate, before the Throne of Grace? Shall I be *aſhamed* to have it known; that I offer up ſocial Supplications in the Family, or am conſcientious in obſerving my private Retirements? Rather, let me glory in this unſpeakable Privilege. Let me reckon it the *nobleſt* Poſture, to fall low on my Knees before his Footſtool; and the *higheſt* Honour, to enjoy Communion with his moſt exalted Majeſty.—Incomparably more noble, than to ſit, in Perſon, on the triumphal Chariot; or to ſtand, in Effigy, amidſt the Temple of Worthies.

MOST ineſtimable, in ſuch a View, is that Promiſe; which ſo often occurs in the prophetic Writings, and is the crowning Benefit of the new Covenant, *I will be thy God**.—Will this ſupremely

* Heb. viii. 10.

ſupremely excellent, and Almighty Being, vouchſafe to be *my* Portion? To ſettle upon a poor Sinner, not the Heritage of a County; not the Poſſeſſion of the whole Earth; but his *own* ever-bleſſed *Self?* May I then, through his free condeſcending Grace, and the unknown Merits of his Son, look upon all theſe infinitely noble Attributes as my Treaſure? May I regard the *Wiſdom*, which ſuperintends ſuch a Multitude of Worlds, as my Guide; the *Power*, which produced, and preſerves them in Exiſtence, as my Guard; the *Goodneſs*, which, by an endleſs Communication of Favours, renders them all ſo many Habitations of Happineſs, as *my exceeding great Reward?*—What a Fund of Felicity, is included in ſuch a Bleſſing! How often does the *Iſraelitiſh* Prince exult in the Aſſurance, that this unutterable and boundleſs Good is his own? Intereſted in this, he bids Defiance to every Evil, that can be dreaded; and reſts in certain Expectation of every Bleſſing, that can be deſired. The *LORD is my Light, and my Salvation; whom then ſhall I fear? The LORD*, with an Air of Exultation, he repeats both his Affiance, and his Challenge, *is the Strength of my Life; of whom then ſhall I be afraid*?* Nothing ſo effectual, as this ap-

 propriating

* Pſal. xxvii. 1.

propriating Faith, to inſpire a Dignity of Mind, ſuperior to tranſitory Trifles; or to create a Calmneſs of Temper, unalarmed by vulgar Fears, unappalled by Death itſelf.—*The* LORD *is my Shepherd*, ſays the ſame truly gallant and heroic Perſonage: *therefore ſhall I lack nothing**. How is it poſſible, He ſhould ſuffer Want, who has the All-ſufficient Fulneſs for his Supply? So long as unerring Wiſdom is capable of contriving the Means; ſo long as uncontroulable Power is able to execute them; ſuch a One cannot fail of being ſafe and happy; whether he continue amidſt the Viciſſitudes of Time, or depart into the unchangeable Eternity.

HERE, let us ſtand a Moment, and humbly contemplate this great GOD, together with ourſelves, in a relative View.—If we reflect on the Works of *material* Nature, their Number incomprehenſible, and their Extent unmeaſurable: each of them apart, ſo admirably framed; the Connections of the Whole, ſo exquiſitely regulated; and all derived, from one and the ſame glorious Agent—If we recollect the far more noble Accompliſhments of elegant Taſte, and diſcerning Judgment; of refined Affections, and exalted Sentiments; which are to be found, among

* Pſal. xxiii. 1.

among the ſeveral Orders of *intelligent* Exiſtence: and all of them flowing, in rich Emanations, from the one ſole Fountain of intellectual Light—If we farther conſider this Author of material Beauty, and moral Excellency, as a *Guardian*, a *Governor*, and *Benefactor* to all his Creatures: ſupporting the whole Syſtem, and protecting each Individual, by an ever-watchful Providence; preſiding over the minuteſt Affairs, and cauſing all Events to terminate in the moſt extenſive Good; heaping, with unremitted Liberality, his Benefits upon every capable Object, and making the Circuit of the Univerſe a Seminary of Happineſs—Is it poſſible for the human Heart, under ſuch captivating Views, to be *indifferent* towards this moſt benign, moſt bountiful Original of Being and of Bliſs? Can any be ſo immerſed in Stupidity, as to ſay unto the Almighty—in the Language of an irreligious Temper, and licentious Life, to ſay? "Depart from Us; we implore not thy "Favour; nor deſire the Knowledge of thy "Ways."—Wonder, O *Heavens!* be amazed, O *Earth!* and let the Inhabitants of *both* expreſs their Aſtoniſhment, at this unparalleled Complication of diſingenuous, ungrateful, deſtructive Perverſeneſs!

IF we conſider our *fallen* and *imperfect* State; frail in our Bodies; enfeebled in our Minds; in every Part of our Conſtitution, and in all the Occurrences of Life, "like a tottering Wall, "or a broken Hedge."—If we ſurvey our *indigent* and *infirm* State; without Holineſs; without ſpiritual Strength; our Poſſeſſion of preſent Conveniencies, intirely dependent on GOD's ſovereign Pleaſure; yea, forfeited, juſtly forfeited, with every future Hope, by a thouſand aggravated Iniquities.—If we add the various *Diſaſters* of our Condition; agitated as we are by tumultuous Paſſions; oppreſſed with diſpiriting Fears; held in Suſpenſe by a Variety of perplexing * Cares: liable to Pains, and expoſed to Troubles; Troubles from every Quarter; Troubles of every Kind—Can we, amidſt ſo many Wants, under ſuch deplorable Infirmities,

* *Perplexing*—Thoſe who read the original Language of the New Teſtament, are ſufficiently appriſed, that ſuch is the *Significancy* of that benevolent Diſſuaſive, urged by our LORD, μη μεριμνατε, *Matt.* vi. 25.—I beg Leave, for the Sake of the *unlearned* Reader, to obſerve; That our Tranſlation, though for the moſt Part faithful and excellent, has here miſrepreſented our Divine Maſter's Meaning. *Take no Thought* for your Food, for your Raiment, for your bodily Welfare, is not only not the true Senſe, but the very Reverſe of the Scriptural Doctrine. We are required

mities, and ſubject to ſuch diſaſtrous Accidents —can we be unconcerned, whether GOD's omnipotent, irreſiſtible, all-conducting Hand be *againſt* Us, or *for* Us? Imagination itſelf ſhudders at the Thought!—Can we reſt ſatisfied, without a well-grounded Perſuaſion, that we are *reconciled* to this ſupreme LORD, and the Objects of his unchangeable Goodneſs!—If there be an abandoned Wretch, whoſe Apprehenſions are ſo fatally blinded; who is ſo utterly loſt to all Senſe of his Duty, and of his Intereſt; let me bewail his *Miſery*, while I abhor his Impiety. Bewail his Miſery; though Popularity, with her choiceſt Laurels, adorn his Brow; though Affluence, with her richeſt Delicacies, load his Table; though half a Nation, or half a World, conſpire to call him *happy*.

MAY I, by a believing Application, ſolace myſelf in this everlaſting Source of Love, Per-

 fection,

required to take a *prudent* and *moderate* Thought, for the Neceſſaries of Life. The Sluggard, who neglects this decent Precaution, is ſeverely reprimanded; is ſent to one of the meaneſt Animals, to bluſh for his Folly, and learn Diſcretion from her Conduct, *Prov.* vi. 6. Our Saviour's Precept, and the exact Senſe of his Expreſſion, is, Take no *anxious* Thought; indulge no *perplexing* Care. No ſuch Care, as may argue an unreaſonable *Diſtruſt* of Providence; or may *rend* and *tear* your Minds with diſtreſſing, with pernicious Solicitude.

fection, and Joy! Grant me this Requeſt, and I aſk no more.—Only, that I may expect, not with a reluctant Anxiety, but with a ready Chearfulneſs, the Arrival of that important Hour; when this Veil of Fleſh ſhall drop, and the Shadows of Mortality flee away. When I ſhall no longer complain of *obſcure* Knowledge; *languid* Affections; and *imperfect* Fruition—but ſhall ſee the uncreated and immortal Majeſty. *See* Him, not in this diſtant and unaffecting Method, of reaſoning from his Works; but with the moſt clear and direct Intuition of the Mind.—When I ſhall *love* Him, not with a cold and contracted Spirit; but with the moſt lively and inlarged Emotions of Gratitude.—When I ſhall inceſſantly *enjoy* the Light of his Countenance; and be united, inſeparably united to his all-glorious GODHEAD.—Take, ye Ambitious, unenvied and unoppoſed, take to yourſelves the Toys of State. May I be enabled to *rejoice* in this bleſſed Hope; and to *triumph* in that amiable, that adorable, that delightful Name, the LORD MY GOD! And I ſhall ſcarce beſtow a Thought, on the ſplendid Pageantry of the World, unleſs it be to *deſpiſe* its empty Pomp, and to *pity* its deluded Admirers.

ALL theſe Bodies, though immenſe in their Size, and almoſt infinite in their Multitude, are *obedient*

*obedient* to the Divine Command. The GOD of Wiſdom "telleth their Numbers," and is intimately acquainted with their various Properties. The GOD of Power "calleth them all "by their Names," and aſſigns them whatſoever Office He pleaſes.—He *marſhals* all the ſtarry Legions, with infinitely greater Eaſe, and nicer Order; than the moſt expert General, arranges his diſciplined Troops. He appoints their *Poſts*; he marks their *Route*; he fixes the Time for their *Return*. The Poſts, which he appoints, they occupy, without fail. In the Route, which he ſettles, they perſevere, without the leaſt Deviation. And to the Inſtant *, which he fixes for their Return, they are preciſely punctual.—He has given them a *Law*, which, through a long Revolution of Ages, ſhall not be broken; unleſs his ſovereign Will interpoſes, for its *Repeal*. Then indeed, the Motion of the celeſtial Orbs is controuled; their Action remains ſuſpended; or their Influence receives a new Direction.—The *Sun*, at his Creation, iſſued forth with a Command, to



* "The Planets, and all the innumerable Hoſt of "heavenly Bodies, perform their Courſes and Revolutions, "with ſo much Certainty and Exactneſs, as never once "to fail; but, for almoſt 6000 Years, come conſtantly "about to the ſame Period, in the hundredth Part of a "Minute." STACKHOUSE's *Hiſt. Bible*.

travel perpetually through the Heavens. Since which, he has never neglected to perform the great Circuit; "rejoicing as a Giant to run "his Race." But, when it is requiſite to accompliſh the Purpoſes of Divine Love, the Orders are countermanded; the flaming Courier remits his Career; *ſtands ſtill in Gibeon* *; and, for the Conveniency of the choſen People, holds back the falling Day.—The *Moon* was diſpatched with a Charge, never to intermit her revolving Courſe, till Day and Night come to an End. But when the Children of Providence, are to be favoured with an uncommon Continuance of Light, ſhe halts in her March; makes a ſolemn Pauſe *in the Valley of Ajalon* †; and

* This is ſpoken in Conformity to the Scripture Language, and according to the common Notion. With reſpect to the Power which effected the Alteration; it is much the ſame Thing, and alike miraculous; whether the Sun, or the Earth, be ſuppoſed to move.

† *Joſh.* x. 12, 13. — The Prophet *Habakkuk*, according to his lofty Manner, celebrates this Event; and points out, in very poetical Diction, the Deſign of ſo ſurpriſing a Miracle.—*The Sun and Moon ſtood ſtill in their Habitation: In the Light*, the long-continued and miraculous Light, *thy Arrows*, edged with Deſtruction, *walked* on their awful Errand; *in the clear Shining* of the Day, protracted for this very Purpoſe, *thy glittering Spear*, launched by thy People, but guided by thy Hand, ſprung to its Prey. *Hab.* iii. 11.

and delays to bring on her attendant Train of Shadows.—When the Enemies of the LORD are to be diſcomfited, the *Stars* are levied into the Service; the Stars are armed, and take the Field; *the Stars, in their Courſes, fought againſt Siſera* *.

So dutiful is material Nature! So obſequious, in *all* her *Forms*, to her Creator's Pleaſure!—The bellowing Thunders, liſten to his Voice; and the vollied Lightnings, obſerve the Direction of his Eye. The flying Storm, and impetuous Whirlwind, wear his Yoke. The raging Waves revere

* *Judg.* v. 20.——The ſcriptural Phraſe *fought againſt*, will, I hope, be a proper *Warrant* for every Expreſſion, I have uſed on this Occaſion.——The Paſſage is generally ſuppoſed to ſignify, that ſome very dreadful *Meteors* (which the Stars were thought to influence) ſuch as fierce Flaſhes of *Lightning*; impetuous Showers of *Rain*; and rapid Storms of *Hail*; were employed by the Almighty to terrify, annoy, and overthrow the Enemies of *Iſrael*. If ſo, there cannot be a more clear and lively Paraphraſe on the Text, than thoſe fine Lines of a *Jewiſh* Writer.—*His ſevere Wrath ſhall HE ſharpen for a Sword*; *and* the World *ſhall* fight *with him* againſt *the Ungodly*. *Then, ſhall the* right-aiming Thunderbolts *go abroad*; *and from the* Clouds, *as from a* well-drawn Bow, *ſhall they fly to the Mark. And* Hail-ſtones, *full of Wrath, ſhall be caſt out of a Stone Bow*; *and the* Water *of the Sea ſhall rage againſt them*; *and the* Floods (as was the Caſe of the River *Kiſhon*) *ſhall cruelly drown them. Yea, a mighty* Wind *ſhall ſtand up againſt them*; *and, like a* Storm, *ſhall blow them away.* Wiſd. v. 20, 21, 22, 23.

revere his Nod: they ſhake the Earth; they daſh the Skies; yet, never offer to paſs the Limits, which He has preſcribed.—Even the planetary Spheres; though vaſtly *larger*, than this wide-extended Earth; are, in his Hand, as *Clay* in the Hands of the Potter. Though, *ſwifter* than the Northern Blaſt, they ſweep the long Tracts of Æther; yet, are they guided by his Reins, and execute whatever He injoins.—All thoſe enormous Globes of *central* Fire, which beam through the boundleſs Azure; in compariſon of which, an Army of Planets, were like a Swarm of Summer Inſects; thoſe, even thoſe, are comformable to his Will, as the *melting Wax* to the impreſſed Seal.—Since *all*, ALL is obedient, throughout the whole Aſcent of Things, ſhall Man be the *only Rebel* againſt the Almighty Maker? Shall theſe unruly *Appetites*, reject his Government, and refuſe their Allegiance? Shall theſe headſtrong *Paſſions*, break looſe from Divine Reſtraint; and run wild, in exorbitant Sallies, after their own Imaginations?

O MY Soul, be ſtung with Remorſe, and overwhelmed with Confuſion, at the Thought! Is it not a righteous Thing, that the bleſſed GOD ſhould ſway the Sceptre, with the moſt abſolute Authority, over all the Creatures, which

which his Power has formed? Eſpecially over thoſe Creatures; whom his diſtinguiſhing Favour, has endued with the noble Principle of Reaſon, and made capable of a bliſsful Immortality? Sure, if all the Ranks of inanimate Exiſtence, conform to their Maker's Decree, by the *Neceſſity* of their Nature; this more excellent Race of Beings, ſhould pay their equal Homage, by the *willing* Compliance of their Affections *.—Come then, all ye *Faculties* of my

* This Argument, I acknowledge, is not abſolutely concluſive. But it is popular and ſtriking. Nor can I think myſelf obliged, in ſuch a Work; where *Fancy* bears a conſiderable Sway; to proceed always with the Caution and Exactneſs, of a *Diſputer* in the *Schools*. If there be ſome Appearance of Analogy, between the Fact and the Inference, it ſeems ſufficient for my Purpoſe; though the Deduction ſhould not be neceſſary, nor the Proceſs ſtrictly ſyllogiſtical.—One of the *Apoſtolic Fathers*, has an affecting and ſublime Paragraph, which runs intirely in this Form: Ηλιος τε και σελήνη, αστερων τε χοροι, καλα την διαταξην αυτε εν ομονοια, δικα πασης παρεκβασεως, εξελισσουσιν τας επιτεταγμενας αυτοις οριομες. *The Sun, the Moon, and the ſtarry Choir, without the leaſt Deviation, and with the utmoſt Harmony, perform the Revolutions appointed them by the ſupreme Decree.* From which Remark, and abundance of other ſimilar Inſtances, obſervable in the Oeconomy of Nature; he exhorts Chriſtians, to a cordial *Unanimity* among themſelves, and a dutiful *Obedience* to God. Vid. *Clem. Roman.* 1 *Ep. ad Corinth. Sect.* 20.—See alſo a beautiful ode in Dr. *Watts*'s Lyric Poems, intituled *The Compariſon and Complaint*, which turns upon this very Thought.

my *Mind*; come, all ye *Powers* of my *Body*; give up yourſelves, without a Moment's Delay, without the leaſt Reſerve, to his Governance. Stand, like dutiful Servants, at his Footſtool; in an everlaſting Readineſs, to *do* whatſoever He requires; to *be* whatſoever He appoints. To further, with united Efforts, the Purpoſes of his Glory in this earthly Scene: or elſe to ſeparate, without Reluctance, at his Summons; the *one*, to ſleep in the ſilent Duſt; the *other*, to advance his Honour, in ſome remoter Colony of his Kingdom.—Thus, may I join with all the Works of the LORD, in all Places of his Dominion, to recognize his univerſal Supremacy; and proclaim Him Sovereign of Souls, as well as Ruler of Worlds.

AT my firſt coming abroad, all theſe Luminaries were *eclipſed*, by the overpowering Luſtre of the Sun. They were all placed in the very ſame Stations; and played the ſame ſprightly Beams; yet, not one of them was ſeen. As the Daylight wore away, and the ſober Shades advanced; *Heſperus*, who leads the ſtarry Train, diſcloſed his radiant Forehead, and catched my Eye. While I ſtood gazing on his bright and beautiful Aſpect, ſeveral of his Attendants peeped through the blue Curtains. Scarce had I turned

turned to obſerve theſe freſh Emanations of Splendor; but others dropt the Veil; others ſtole into View. When lo! faſter and more numerous, Multitudes ſprung from Obſcurity; they poured, in ſhining Troops, and in ſweet Confuſion, over all the empyrean Plain. Till the Firmament ſeemed, like one vaſt Conſtellation; and "a Flood of Glory burſt from all the "Skies."

Is not ſuch the *Riſe*, and ſuch the *Progreſs* of a true *Converſion*, in the prejudiced Infidel, or inattentive Sinner? During the Period of his vainer Years, a Thouſand intereſting Truths, lay utterly undiſcovered; a Thouſand momentous Concerns, were intirely diſregarded. But, when divine Grace diſſipates the deluſive Glitter, which dazled his Underſtanding, and beguiled his Affections; then, He begins to diſcern, dimly to diſcern, the Things which belong unto his Peace. Some Admonition of Scripture, darts Conviction into his Soul; as the Glimmering of a Star, pierces the Gloom of Night. — Then, perhaps, another awful, or chearing Text, impreſſes Terror, or diffuſes Comfort. A *Threatening* alarms his Fears, or a *Promiſe* awakens his Hopes. This, poſſibly, is ſucceeded by ſome *afflictive* Diſpenſation of Providence; and improved by ſome edifying and

and *inſtructive* Converſation. All which is eſtabliſhed, as to its Continuance; and inlarged, as to its Influence; by a diligent Study of the ſacred Word.—By this Means, new Truths continually pour their Evidence. Scenes of refined and exalted, but hitherto unknown Delight, addreſs Him with their Attractives. New Deſires take Wing; new Purſuits are ſet on Foot. A new Turn of Mind forms his Temper; a new Habit of Converſation regulates his Life. In a Word; *old Things are paſſed away; and all Things become new.* He, who was ſometime Darkneſs, is now Light, and Life, and Joy in the LORD.

THE more attentively I view the cryſtal Concave, the more fully I diſcern the Richneſs of its Decorations. Abundance of minuter Lights, which lay concealed from a *ſuperficial* Notice, are viſible on a *cloſer* Examination. Eſpecially in thoſe Tracts of the Sky, which are called the *Galaxy*; and are diſtinguiſhable, by a ſort of milky Path. There, the Stars are crouded, rather than diſſeminated. The Region ſeems to be all on a Blaze, with their blended Rays.—Beſides this vaſt Profuſion, which in my preſent Situation the Eye diſcovers; was I to make my Survey, from any other Part of the

the Globe, lying nearer the Southern Pole; I ſhould behold a *new Choir* of ſtarry Bodies, which have never appeared within our Horizon. —Was I (which is ſtill more wonderful) either Here or There, to view the Firmament with the Virtuoſo's Glaſs; I ſhould find a prodigious Multitude of flaming Orbs, which, immerſed in Depths of Æther, eſcape the keeneſt unaſſiſted Sight*—Yet, in theſe various Situations; even with the Aid of the Teleſcopic Tube; I ſhould not be able to deſcry the Half, perhaps not a *Thouſandth* Part, of thoſe majeſtic Luminaries, which the vaſt expanſive Heavens contain†.—So, the more diligently I purſue my Search,

* Come forth, O Man, yon azure Round ſurvey,
And view thoſe Lamps, which yield eternal Day.
Bring forth thy Glaſſes: Clear thy wond'ring Eyes:
Millions beyond the former Millions riſe:
Look farther:—Millions more blaze from remoter Skies.

*See an ingenious Poem, intituled* The Univerſe.

† How noble, conſidered in this View, are the Celebrations of the Divine Majeſty, which frequently occur in the ſacred Writings! *It is the LORD that made the Heavens.* Pſal. xcvi. 5.—What a prodigious Dignity, does ſuch a Senſe of Things give to that devout Aſcription of Praiſe! *Thou, even Thou, art LORD alone; Thou haſt made Heaven, the Heaven of Heavens, with all their Hoſt.* Nehem. ix. 6.—Examined by this Rule, the beautiful Climax in our inſpired Hymn, is ſublime beyond Com-

Search, into thoſe Oracles of eternal Truth, the *Scriptures*; I perceive a wider, a deeper, an ever increaſing Fund of ſpiritual Treaſures. I perceive the brighter Strokes of Wiſdom, and the richer Diſplays of Goodneſs; a more tranſcendent Excellency in the illuſtrious Meſſiah, and a more deplorable Vileneſs in fallen Man; a more immaculate Purity in GOD'S Law, and more precious Privileges in his Goſpel. Yet, after a Courſe of Study, ever ſo aſſiduous; ever ſo prolonged; I ſhould have Reaſon to own myſelf, a mere *Babe* in heavenly Knowledge; or, at moſt, but a *puerile* Proficient, in the School of CHRIST.

AFTER all my moſt accurate Inſpection, thoſe ſtarry Orbs appear but as *glittering Points*. Even the Planets, though ſo much nearer our earthly Manſion, ſeem only like burning *Bullets*. If then, we have ſuch *imperfect Apprehenſions* of viſible and material Things; how much more ſcanty and inadequate, muſt be our Notions of inviſible and immortal Objects!—We behold the Stars. Though every one is incomparably bigger, than the Globe we inhabit; yet they dwindle,

pare. *Praiſe HIM, Sun and Moon: Praiſe HIM, all ye Stars of Light: Praiſe HIM, ye Heavens of Heavens.* Pſal. cxlviii. 3, 4.

dwindle, upon our Survey, into the moſt diminutive Forms. Thus, we ſee by Faith the Glories of the bleſſed JESUS; the atoning Efficacy of his Death; the juſtifying Merit of his Righteouſneſs; and the Joys, which are reſerved for his Followers. But alaſs! even our moſt *exalted* Ideas, are vaſtly *below* the Truth. As much below the Truth; as the Report, which our Eyes make of thoſe celeſtial Edifices, is inferior to their real Grandeur.—Should we take in all the *magnifying* Aſſiſtances, which Art has contrived; thoſe luminous Bodies, would elude our Skill, and appear as *ſmall* as ever. Should an Inhabitant of Earth, travel towards the Cope of Heaven; and be carried forwards, in his aërial Journey, more than a Hundred and ſixty Millions of Miles*; even in that advanced Situation, thoſe *Oceans* of *Flame*, would look no larger, than *radiant Specks*.—In like manner, conceive ever ſo magnificently, of the Redeemer's Honours; and of



* This, incredible as it may ſeem, is not a mere Suppoſition, but a real Fact. For, about the Twenty-firſt of *December*, we are above 160,000,000 of Miles nearer the Northern Parts of the Sky, than we were at the Twenty-firſt of *June*. And yet, with regard to the Stars ſituate in that Quarter, we perceive no *Change* in their *Aſpect*, nor any *Augmentation* of their *Magnitude*.

the Bliſs, which he has purchaſed for his People; yet you will fall ſhort. Raiſe your Imagination *higher*; ſtretch your Invention *wider*; give them *all* the Scope, which a ſoaring and excurſive Fancy can take; ſtill, your Conceptions will be extremely *diſproportionate*, to their genuine Perfections. — Vaſt are the Bodies, which roll in the Expanſe of Heaven: vaſter far are thoſe Fields of Æther, through which they run their endleſs Round: But the Excellency of JESUS, and the Happineſs laid up for his Servants, are greater than *either*; than *both*; than *all*. An inſpired Writer calls the former, "The unſearchable Riches of CHRIST;" and ſtiles the latter, "An exceeding great and eternal "Weight of Glory."

IF thoſe Stars, are ſo many inexhauſtible Magazines of Fire, and immenſe *Reſervoirs* of Light; there is no Reaſon to doubt, but they have ſome very *grand Uſes*, ſuitable to the Magnificence of their Nature. To ſpecify, or explain, the particular Purpoſes they anſwer; is altogether impoſſible, in our preſent State of Diſtance and Ignorance. This, however, we may clearly diſcern; they are diſpoſed in that very Manner, which is moſt *pleaſing* and moſt *ſerviceable* to Mankind. — They are not pleaſed at an

an *infinite Remove*, ſo as to lie beyond our Sight; neither are they brought *ſo near* our Abode, as to annoy us with their Beams. We ſee them ſhine on every Side. The deep Azure, which ſerves them as a Ground, heightens their Splendor. At the ſame Time, their Influence is gentle, and their Rays are deſtitute of Heat. So that we are ſurrounded with a Multitude of fiery Globes, which beautify and illuminate the Firmament, without any Riſque, either to the *Coolneſs* of our Night, or the *Quiet* of our Repoſe.—Who can ſufficiently admire that wondrous Benignity; which on our Account, ſtrews the *Earth* with Bleſſings of every Kind; and vouchſafes to make the *very Heavens*, ſubſervient to our Delight?

IT is not ſolely to adorn the Roof of our Palace, with coſtly Gildings; that GOD commands the celeſtial Luminaries, to glitter through the Gloom. We alſo reap conſiderable Benefits, from their Miniſtry.—They *divide* our *Time*, and fix its ſolemn Periods. They ſettle the *Order* of our *Works*; and are, according to the Deſtination mentioned in ſacred Writ, "for "Signs, and for Seaſons; for Days, and for "Years." The Returns of Heat and Cold alone, would have been too precarious a Rule. But theſe radiant Bodies; by the *Variation*, and

alſo by the *Regularity*, of their Motions; afford a Method of calculating, abſolutely certain, and ſufficiently obvious. By this, the *Farmer* is inſtructed, when to commit his grain to the Furrows, and how to conduct the operations of Huſbandry. By this, the Sailor knows when to proceed on his Voyage, with leaſt Peril; and how to carry on the Buſineſs of Navigation, with moſt Succeſs.

WHY ſhould not the Chriſtian, the Probationer for Eternity, learn from the ſame Monitors, to *number* — for nobler Purpoſes, to number his *Days*; and duly to tranſact the grand, grand Affairs of his everlaſting Salvation? Since GOD has appointed ſo many bright Meaſurers of our Time, to determine its larger Periods, and to minute down its ordinary Stages; ſure, this moſt ſtrongly inculcates its *Value*, and ſhould powerfully prompt us to *improve* it.—Behold! the ſupreme Lord marks the Progreſs of our Life, in that moſt conſpicuous Kalendar above. Does not ſuch an Ordination tell us, and in the moſt emphatical Language; That our Life is given for *Uſe*, not for *Waſte*? That no Portion of it is delivered, but under a ſtrict Account; that all of it is entered, as it paſſes, in the Divine Regiſter; and, therefore, that the Stewards of ſuch a Talent, are to expect a future Reckoning?—

Be-

Behold! the very Heavens are bid to be the *Accomptants*, of our Years, and Months, and Days. O! may this induce us to manage them, with a vigilant Frugality; to part with them, as Miſers with their *hoarded Treaſure*, warily and circumſpectly; and, if poſſible, as Merchants with their *rich Commodities*, not without an Equivalent, either in perſonal Improvement, or ſocial Uſefulneſs!

How *bright* the ſtarry Diamonds ſhine! The Ambition of Eaſtern Monarchs could imagine no Diſtinction, more noble and ſublime, than that of being likened to thoſe beaming Orbs *.— They form Night's *richeſt Dreſs*; and ſparkle upon her ſable Robe, like Jewels of the fineſt Luſtre. Like Jewels! I wrong their Character. The lucid Stone has no Brilliancy; quenched is the Flame even of the golden Topaz; compared with thoſe glowing Decorations of Heaven.— How widely are their radiant Honours *diffuſed!* No Nation ſo remote, but ſees their Beauty, and rejoices in their Uſefulneſs. They have been admired by all preceding Generations; and every riſing Age, will gaze on their Charms, with renewed delight.—How *animating*, then, is that Promiſe, made to the faithful Miniſters of the



* Numb. xxiv. 17. Dan. viii. 10.

Goſpel! "They that turn many to Righteouſ-"neſs, ſhall ſhine as the Stars for ever and "ever *." Is not this a moſt winning Encouragement, "to ſpend and be ſpent," in the Service of Souls? Methinks, the Stars beckon, as they twinkle. Methinks, they ſhew me their Splendors, on purpoſe to inſpire me with *Alacrity*, in the Race ſet before me; on purpoſe to enliven my *Activity*, in the Work that is given me to do. —Yes; ye majeſtic Monitors, I underſtand your Meaning. If Honour has any Charms; if true Glory, the Glory which cometh from GOD, is any Attractive; you diſplay the moſt powerful Incitements, to exerciſe all Aſſiduity in my holy Vocation. I will, henceforth, obſerve your Intimation; and, when Zeal becomes *languid*, have recourſe to your heavenly Lamps. If ſo be, I may *rekindle* its Ardor, at thoſe inextinguiſhable Fires.

OF the *Polar* Star, it is obſervable; that, while other Luminaries *alter* their Situation, this ſeems invariably *fixed* †. While other Luminaries, now,

* Dan. xii. 3.

† I ſpeak in Conformity to the *Appearance* of the Object. For, though this remarkable Star revolves round the Pole, its Motion is ſo *ſlow*, and the Circle it deſcribes ſo *ſmall*; as render both the Revolution and Change of Situation, hardly perceivable.

now, mount the Battlements of Heaven, and appear upon Duty; now, retire beneath the Horizon, and reſign to a freſh-Set, the Watches of the Night; this never departs from its Station. This, in every Seaſon, maintains an uniform Poſition; and is always to be found, in the ſame Tract of the Northern Sky.—How often has this beamed bright Intelligence on the *Sailor*; and conducted the Keel, to its deſired Haven! In early Ages, thoſe, who went down to the Sea in Ships, and occupied their Buſineſs in great Waters, had ſcarce any other ſure Guide for their wandering Veſſel. This therefore they viewed, with the moſt ſolicitous Attention. By this, they formed their Obſervations, and regulated their Voyage. When this was obſcured by Clouds, or inveloped in Miſts; the trembling Mariner was *bewildered*, on the watery Waſte. His Thoughts fluctuated, as much as the floating Surge; and he knew not, *where* he was advanced, or *whither* he ſhould ſteer. But, when this auſpicious Star broke through the Gloom; it diſſipated the Anxiety of his Mind, and cleared up his dubious Paſſage. He re-aſſumed, with Alacrity, the Management of the Helm; and was able to ſhape his Courſe, with ſome tolerable Degree of Satisfaction and Certainty.

*SUCH*, only much clearer in its Light, and much ſurer in its Direction, is the *Holy Word* of GOD, to thoſe Myriads of intellectual Beings, who are bound for the eternal Shores. Who, embarked in a Veſſel of feeble Fleſh, are to paſs the Waves of this tempeſtuous and perilous World. In all *Difficulties*, thoſe ſacred Pages ſhed an encouraging Ray; in all *Uncertainties*, they ſuggeſt the right Determination, and point out the proper Procedure. What is ſtill a more ineſtimable Advantage; they, like the Star which conducted the Eaſtern Sages, make plain the Way of Acceſs to a *Redeemer*. They diſplay his unſpeakable Merits; they diſcover the Method of being intereſted in his great Atonement; and lead the weary Soul, *toſſed* by Troubles, and *ſhattered* by Temptations, to that only Harbour of peaceful Repoſe.—Let us, therefore, attend to this *unerring* Directory, with the ſame Conſtancy of Regard, as the Sea-faring Man obſerves his Compaſs. Let us become as thoroughly acquainted with this ſacred Chart, as the Pilot is with every truſty Mark, that gives Notice of a lurking Rock; and with every open Road, that yields a ſafe Paſſage into the Port. Above all, let us commit ourſelves to this infallible Guidance, with the ſame implicit Reſignation; let us conform our Conduct to its exalted

exalted Precepts, with the ſame ſedulous Care; as the Children of *Iſrael*, when ſojourning in the trackleſs Deſert, followed the Pillar of Fire, and the Motions of the miraculous Cloud.— So, will it introduce us, not into an earthly *Canaan*, flowing with Milk and Honey; but into an *immortal* Paradiſe, where is the Fulneſs of Joy, and where are Pleaſures for evermore. It will introduce us into thoſe happy, happy Regions, where *our Sun ſhall no more go down, nor our Moon withdraw itſelf; for the LORD ſhall be our everlaſting Light, and the Days of our Mourning*, together with the Fatigues of our Pilgrimage, *ſhall be ended* *.

I PERCEIVE a great *Variety*, in the Size and Splendor of thoſe Gems of Heaven. Some, are of the firſt Magnitude; others, of an inferior Order. Some *glow*, with intenſe Flames; others *glimmer*, with fainter Beams. Yet, *all* are beautiful; all have their peculiar Luſtre, and diſtinct Uſe; all tend, in their different Degrees, to enamel the Cope of Heaven, and embroider the Robe of Night.—This Circumſtance is remarked by an Author, whoſe Sentiments are a Source of Wiſdom, and the very Standard of Truth. "One Star, ſays the Apoſtle of the "*Gentiles*,

* Iſa. lx. 20.

" *Gentiles, differeth* from another Star in Glory:
" *So* alſo is the Reſurrection of the Dead."

IN the World above, are various *Degrees* of Happineſs, various Seats of Honour. Some will riſe to more illuſtrious Diſtinctions, and richer Joys *. Some, like Veſſels of ample Capacity, will admit more copious Acceſſions of Light and Excellence. Yet, there will be no Want, no Deficiency, in any; but a Fulneſs both of Divine Satisfactions, and perſonal Perfections. *Each* will enjoy *all* the Good; and be adorned with *all* the Glory; that his Heart can wiſh, or his Condition receive.—None will know what it is to envy. Not the leaſt Malevolence, nor the leaſt Selfiſhneſs, but everlaſting Friendſhip prevails, and a mutual Complacency in each other's Delight. Love, cordial Love, will give every particular Saint, a Participation of all the Fruitions †; which are diffuſed through the whole Aſſembly of the Bleſſed.—No one *eclipſes*, but each *reflects Light* upon his Brother. A ſweet

* 1 *Cor.* xv. 41, 42. The great Mr. *Mede prefers* the Senſe here given; and the learned Dr. *Hammond admits* it, into his Paraphraſe. Whoſe joint Authority, though far from excluding any *other*, yet is a ſufficient Warrant for *this* Application of the Words.

† *Tolle Invidiam, & tuum eſt quod habeo: Tolle Invidiam, & meum eſt quod habes.* AUGUSTINE.

ſweet Interchange of Rays ſubſiſts; all enlightened by the great Fountain, and all enlightening one another. By which reciprocal Communication of Pleaſure and Amity, each will be continually *receiving from*, each inceſſantly *adding to*, the general Felicity.

HAPPY, ſupremely happy they, who are admitted into the celeſtial Manſions. Better to be a Door-keeper in thoſe "Ivory Palaces*," than to fill the moſt gorgeous Throne on Earth. The very loweſt Place at GOD's Right-hand, is diſtinguiſhed Honour, and conſummate Bliſs. —O! that we may, in ſome meaſure, anticipate that beatific State, while we remain in our Baniſhment below! May we, *by rejoicing* in the ſuperior Proſperity of another, make it *our own!* And, provided the general Reſult is Harmony, be content, be pleaſed, with whatſoever Part is aſſigned to our Share, in the univerſal Choir of Affairs.

WHILE I am conſidering the heavenly Bodies, I muſt not intirely forget thoſe fundamental Laws of our modern Aſtronomy, *Projection* and *Attraction*. One of which is the all-combining Cement, the other is the ever-operative Spring, of the mighty Frame.—In the Beginning,

* Pſal. xlv. 8.

ning, the all-creating FIAT impreſſed a proper Degree of Motion, on each of thoſe whirling Orbs. Which, if not controuled, would have carried them on, in ſtrait Lines, and to endleſs Lengths; till they were even loſt, in the Abyſs of Space. But, the *gravitating* Property, being added to the *projectile* Force, determined their Courſes to a *circular** Form; and obliged the reluctant Rovers, to perform their deſtined Rounds.—Were either of thoſe Cauſes to ſuſpend their Action, all the harmoniouſly moving Spheres would be diſconcerted. Would degenerate

* I am aware, the planetary Orbits are not ſtrictly circular, but rather *elliptical*. However, as they are but a ſmall Remove from the perfectly round Figure; and partake of it incomparably more, than the Trajectories of the Comets; I chooſe to repreſent the Thing in this View. Eſpecially, becauſe the Notion of a Circle, is ſo much more intelligible to the Generality of Readers, than that of an Ellipſis; and becauſe I laid it down for a Rule, not to admit any ſuch *abſtruſe* Sentiment, or *difficult* Expreſſion, as ſhould demand a painful Attention, inſtead of raiſing an agreeable Idea. For which Reaſon, I have avoided *technical* Terms; have taken no Notice of *Jupiter*'s Satellites, or *Saturn*'s Ring; have not ſo much as mentioned the Names of the Planets, nor attempted to wade into any Depths of the Science. Leſt to thoſe who have no Opportunity of uſing the Teleſcope, or of acquainting themſelves with a Syſtem of Aſtronomy, I ſhould propound Riddles, rather than diſplay *entertaining* and *edifying* Truths.

nerate into ſluggiſh inactive Maſſes; and falling into the central Fire, be *burnt* to Aſhes. Or elſe, would exorbitate into wild Confuſion; and each, by the Rapidity of its Whirl, be *diſſipated* into Atoms. But, the impulſive and attractive Energy, being moſt nicely attempered to each other; and, under the immediate Operation of the Almighty, exerting themſelves in perpetual Concert; the various Globes run their radiant Races, without the leaſt Interruption or the leaſt Deviation. So as to create the alternate Changes of *Day* and *Night*; and diſtribute the uſeful Viciſſitudes of *ſucceeding* Seaſons. So as to anſwer all the great Ends of a gracious Providence; and procure every comfortable Convenience, for univerſal Nature.

DOES not this Conſtitution of the material, very naturally lead the Thoughts, to thoſe grand Principles of the moral and devotional World, *Faith* and *Love?*—Theſe are often celebrated by the inſpired Apoſtle, as a comprehenſive Summary of the Goſpel *. Theſe inſpirit the Breaſt, and regulate the Progreſs, of each private Chriſtian. Theſe unite the whole Congregation of the Faithful to GOD, and one another. To GOD, the great Centre, in the Bonds of

* Col. i. 4. Philem. ver. 5.

of Gratitude and Devotion; to one another, by a reciprocal Intercourſe of brotherly Affections, and friendly Offices.—If you aſk; Why is it impoſſible for the true Believer, to live at all Adventures? to *ſtagnate* in Sloth, or habitually to *deviate* from Duty?—We anſwer; It is owing to "his Faith, working by Love †." He aſſuredly truſts, that CHRIST has ſuſtained the Infamy, and endured the Torment, due to his Sins. He firmly relies on that Divine Propitiation, for the Pardon of all his Guilt; and humbly expects everlaſting Salvation, as the Purchaſe of his Saviour's Merits. This produces ſuch a Spirit of Gratitude, as refines his Inclinations, and animates his whole Behaviour. He cannot, he cannot run to Exceſs of Riot; becauſe Love to his adorable Redeemer, like a ſtrong, but ſilken *Curb*, ſweetly reſtrains him. He cannot, he cannot lie lulled in a lethargic Indolence; becauſe Love to the ſame infinite Benefactor, like a pungent, but endearing *Spur*, pleaſingly excites him.—In a Word; Faith ſupplies the powerful Impulſe, while Love gives the determining Biaſs; and leads the willing Feet, through the whole Circle of GOD's Commandments. By the united Efficacy of theſe

† Gal. v. 6.

theſe *heavenly Graces*, the Chriſtian Conduct is preſerved, in the Uniformity and Beauty of Holineſs; as by the blended Power of thoſe *Newtonian Principles*, the ſolar Syſtem revolves, in a ſteady and magnificent Regularity.

How admirable, how extenſive, how diverſified, is the Force of this ſingle Principle, *Attraction* *!—This penetrates the very Eſſence of all Bodies, and diffuſes itſelf to the remoteſt Limits of the mundane Syſtem.—By this, the Worlds impreſſed with Motion, hang *ſelf-balanced* on their Centres †; and, though Orbs of immenſe Magnitude, require nothing, but this amazing Property, for their Support.—To this we aſcribe a Phænomenon, of a very different Kind, the *Preſſure* of the Atmoſphere. Which, though a yielding and expanſive Fluid; yet conſtipated by an attractive Energy; ſurrounds the whole Globe, and incloſes every Creature, as it were with a tight Bandage. An Expedient this, abſolutely neceſſary to preſerve the Texture of our Bodies; and indeed, to maintain every Species of Animal Exiſtence.—Attraction! Urged by this wonderful impetus, the *Rivers* circulate,

* I mean the Attraction both of *Gravitation* and *Coheſion*.

† *Ponderibus librata ſuis.*

circulate, copious and unintermitted, among all the Nations of the Earth: ſweeping with Rapidity down the Steeps, or ſoftly ebbing through the Plains. Impelled by the ſame myſterious Force, the *nutricious Juices* are detached from the Soil; and, aſcending the Trees, find their Way through Millions of the fineſt Meanders, in order to transfuſe vegetable Life into all the Branches. This confines the *Ocean*, within proper Bounds. Though the Waves thereof roar; though they toſs themſelves, with all the Madneſs of indignant Rage; yet, checked by this potent, this inevitable Curb, they are unable to paſs even the ſlight Barrier of Sand. To this the *Mountains* owe that unſhaken Firmneſs, which laughs at the Shock of careering Winds; and bids the Tempeſt, with all its mingled Horrors, impotently rave.—By virtue of this inviſible Mechaniſm; without the Aid of Crane or Pulley, or any Inſtrument of human Device; many Thouſand Tons of Water are *raiſed*, every Moment, into the Regions of the Firmament. By this, they continue *ſuſpended* in thin Air, without any capacious Ciſtern, to contain their Subſtance; or any maſſy Pillars, to ſuſtain their Weight. By this ſame variouſly acting Power, they return to the Place of their native Reſidence; *diſtilled* in gentle Falls of Dew, of

*preci-*

*precipitated* in impetuous Showers of Rain. They *ſlide* into the Fields in fleecy Flights of Snow, or are *darted* upon the Houſes in clattering Storms of Hail.—This occaſions the ſtrong *Coheſion* of ſolid Bodies. Without which, our large Machines could exert themſelves with no Vigour; and the nicer Utenſils of Life, would elude our Expectations of Service. This affords a Foundation, for all thoſe delicate or noble mechanic Arts; which furniſh Mankind with numberleſs Conveniencies, both of Ornament and Delight.—In ſhort; this is the prodigious *Ballaſt*, which compoſes the Equilibrium, and conſtitutes the Stability of Things: this, the great *Chain*, which forms the Connexions of univerſal Nature; and the mighty *Engine*, which prompts, facilitates, and, in good meaſure, accompliſhes all her Operations.—What *complicated* Effects, from a *ſingle* Cauſe*! What Profuſion, amidſt Frugality! An unknown Profuſion of Benefits, with the utmoſt Frugality of Expence!

AND what *is* this Attraction? Is it a Quality, in its Exiſtence, inſeparable from Matter; and,



* See another remarkable Inſtance of this Kind, in the *Reflections on a Flower Garden*, pag. 183.—together with a fine Obſervation, quoted in the correſponding Note.

in its Acting, independent on the DEITY!—Quite the reverſe. It is the very *Finger* of GOD: the conſtant Impreſſion of Divine Power: a Principle, neither innate in Matter, nor intelligible by Mortals.—Does it not, however, bear a conſiderable Analogy to the *Agency* of the HOLY GHOST, in the Chriſtian Œconomy? Are not the gracious Operations of the Bleſſed Spirit, thus *extenſive*, thus *admirable*, thus *various?*—That Almighty Being tranſmits his Gifts, through every Age; and communicates his Graces, to every Adherent on the Redeemer. All, either of illuſtrious Memory, or of beneficial Tendency; in a Word, "all the Good "that is done upon Earth, He doth it himſelf." Strong in *his* Aid, and in the Power of *his* Might, the Saints of all Times, have trod Vice under their Feet; have triumphed over this abject World; and converſed in Heaven, while they dwelt on earth. *Not I, but the Grace of GOD which was with me**, is the unanimous Acknowledgment of them All.—By the ſame kindly Succours, the whole Church is ſtill enlightened, quickened, and governed. Through his benign Influences, the Scales of *Ignorance*, fall from the Underſtanding; the Leproſy of *evil*

* 1 Cor. xv. 10.

*evil* Concupiſcence, is purged from the Will; and the Fetters, the more than adamantine Fetters of *habitual* Iniquity, drop off from the Converſation. He breathes even upon dry Bones *, and they live: They are animated with Faith; they pant with ardent and heavenly Deſire; they exerciſe themſelves in all the Duties of Godlineſs.—His real, though ſecret, Inſpiration, diſſolves the Flint in the impenitent Breaſt; and binds up the Sorrows, of the broken Heart. Raiſes the Thoughts high, in the Elevations of holy Hope; yet lays them low, in the Humiliations of inward Abaſement. *Steels* the Soul with impenetrable Reſolution, and perſevering Fortitude; at the ſame time, *ſoftens* it into a Dove-like Meekneſs, and *melts* it in penitential Sorrow.

WHEN I contemplate thoſe ample and magnificent Structures, erected over all the æthereal Plains:—When I look upon them as ſo many ſplendid Repoſitories of Light, or fruitful Abodes of Life:—When I remember, that there may be other Orbs, vaſtly more remote, than thoſe which appear to our unaided Sight; Orbs, whoſe Effulgence, though travelling



* See that beautiful Piece of ſacred and allegorical Imagery diſplayed, *Ezek.* xxxvii.

ever ſince the Creation, is not yet arrived upon our Coaſts *:—When I ſtretch my Thoughts to the innumerable Orders of Being, which inhabit all thoſe ſpacious Syſtems; from the *loftieſt Seraph*, to the loweſt Reptile; from the Armies of Angels, which ſurround the Throne of JEHOVAH; to the *puny Nations*, which tinge

* If this Conjecture (which has no leſs a Perſon than the celebrated Mr. *Huygens* for its Author) concerning *unſeen Stars*, be true—If, to this Obſervation, be added, what is affirmed by our ſkilful Aſtronomers; that the Motion of the Rays of Light is ſo *ſurpriſingly ſwift*, as to paſs through ten Millions of Miles in a ſingle Minute—How vaſt! beyond Imagination vaſt and unmeaſurable, are the Spaces of the Univerſe!—While the Mind is diſtended with the *grand Idea*; or rather, while ſhe is diſpatching her ableſt Powers of piercing Judgment, and excurſive Fancy; and finds them all *drop ſhort*; all baffled by the amazing Subject: Permit me to apply that ſpirited Exclamation, and noble Remark—

——Say, proud Arch,
Built with divine Ambition; in Diſdain
Of Limit built; built in the Taſte of Heav'n!
Vaſt Concave! Ample Dome! Waſt thou deſign'd
A *meet* Apartment for the DEITY?
Not ſo: That Thought alone thy State impairs:
Thy *Lofty* ſinks; and ſhallows thy *Profound*;
And ſtreightens thy *Diffuſive*.—

*Night Thoughts*, N° IX.

tinge with Blue the Surface of the Plum*, or mantle the ſtanding Pool with Green:—How various appear the Links, in this immenſe Chain! How vaſt the Gradations, in this univerſal Scale of Exiſtence! Yet all theſe, though ever ſo vaſt and various, are the *Work* of GOD's Hand, and are full of his *Preſence*.

HE rounded in his Palm thoſe dreadfully large Globes, which are pendulous in the Vault of Heaven. He kindled thoſe aſtoniſhingly bright Fires, which fill the Firmament with a Flood of Glory. By Him they are ſuſpended in *fluid* Æther, and cannot be ſhaken: By Him they diſpenſe a *perpetual* Tide of Beams, and are never exhauſted.—He formed, with inexpreſſible Nicety, that delicately fine Collection of Tubes; that unknown Multiplicity of ſubtile Springs; which organize, and actuate, the Frame of the minuteſt Inſect. He bids the crimſon Current roll; the vital Movements play; and aſſociates a World of Wonders, even in an *animated Point*†.—In all theſe, is a

S 3 ſignal

* Ev'n the *blue Down* the purple Plum ſurrounds,
A *living World*, thy failing Sight confounds.
To HIM a peopled Habitation ſhews,
Where Millions taſte the Bounty GOD beſtows.
*See a beautiful and inſtructive Poem, ſtiled*—DEITY.

† There are living Creatures, abundantly ſmaller than the Mite. Mr. *Bradley*, in his Treatiſe on Gardening, mentions

ſignal Exhibition of creating Power; to all theſe, are extended, the ſpecial Regards of preſerving Goodneſs. From hence, let me learn to rely on the Providence, and to revere the Preſence, of the Supreme Majeſty.

To *rely* on his *Providence*.——For, amidſt that inconceivable Number and Variety of Beings, which ſwarm through the Regions of Creation, not one is overlooked, not one is neglected, by the great omnipotent Cauſe of all. However inconſiderable in its Character, or diminutive in its Size, it is ſtill the Production of the univerſal Maker, and belongs to

mentions an Inſect, which, after accurate Examination, he found to be a Thouſand times *leſs* than the *leaſt* viſible Grain of Sand. Yet ſuch an Inſect, though quite imperceptible to the naked Eye, is an Elephant, is a Whale, compared with other Animalcules almoſt infinitely more minute, diſcovered by Mr. *Lewenhoek*.—If we conſider the ſeveral Limbs, which compoſe ſuch an organized Particle; The different Muſcles, which actuate ſuch a Set of Limbs; The Flow of Spirits, incomparably more attenuated, which put thoſe Muſcles in Motion: The various Fluids, which circulate: The different Secretions, which are performed: Together with the peculiar Minuteneſs of the Solids, before they arrive at their full Growth: Not to mention other *more aſtoniſhing* Modes of Diminution:—Sure, we ſhall have the utmoſt Reaſon to acknowledge, that the adored Maker is—MAXIMUS IN MINIMIS; *greatly glorious* even in his *ſmalleſt* Works.

to the Family of the Almighty Father.—— What? though inthroned Archangels, enjoy the *Smiles* of his *Countenance!* Yet, the low Inhabitants of Earth, the moſt deſpicable Worms of the Ground, are not excluded from his *providential Care.* Though the Manifeſtation of his Perfections, is vouchſafed to holy and intellectual Eſſences; his Ear is open, to the Cries of the young Raven. His Eye is attentive, to the Wants, and to the Welfare, of the very meaneſt Births of Nature.—How much leſs then, are his own People diſregarded? Thoſe, for whom He has delivered his beloved Son to Death, and for whom He has prepared Habitations of eternal Joy. *They* diſregarded! No. THEY are "kept as the Apple of an "Eye." The very Hairs of their Head are all numbered. The fondeſt Mother may *forget* the Infant, that is "dandled upon her Knees," and ſucks at her Breaſt*; much ſooner than the



* *Iſa.* xlix. 15. *Can a Woman forget her ſucking Child, that ſhe ſhould not have Compaſſion on the Son of her Womb? Yea, they may forget; yet will I not forget thee.*—How delicate and expreſſive are the Images, in this charming Scripture! How full of *Beauty*, if beheld in a critical, how rich with *Conſolation*, if conſidered in a believing, View!—Can a *Woman?* One of the ſofter Sex; whoſe Nature is moſt impreſſible, and whoſe Paſſions are remarkably

Father of everlaſting Compaſſions can *diſcontinue*, or *remit*, his watchful Tenderneſs to his People—his Children—his Heirs.

LET

ably tender—Can ſuch a one, not barely diſregard, but intirely *forget*; not ſuſpend her Care for a while, but utterly eraſe the very Memory—Of her *Child*; her own Child, not another's; a Child, that was formed in her *Womb*, and is a Part of herſelf?—Her *Son*; the more important, and therefore more deſirable Species; to whom it peculiarly belongs, to preſerve the Name, and build up the Family—Her *only* Son; for the Word is ſingular; and refers to a Caſe, where the Offſpring, not being numerous, but centred in a ſingle Birth, muſt be productive of the fondeſt Endearment—Can ſhe diveſt herſelf of all Concern for ſuch a Child; not when he is grown up to Maturity, or gone abroad from her Houſe; but, while he continues in an infantile State, and muſt owe his whole Safety to her kind Attendance; while he lies in her Boſom, reſts on her Arm, and even *ſucks* at her Breaſt?—Eſpecially, if the poor Innocent be racked with Pain, or ſeized by ſome ſevere Affliction; and ſo become an Object of *Compaſſion*, as well as of Love. Can ſhe hear its piercing Cries; can ſhe ſee it all reſtleſs, all helpleſs under its Miſery; and feel no Emotions of parental Pity?—If *one* ſuch Monſter of Inhumanity might be found; could *all* (here the Prophet, to give his Compariſon the utmoſt Energy, changes the ſingular Number into the plural. It is not גם חיא, or גם אחת, but גם אלה) could *all* Mothers be ſo degenerate? This, ſure, cannot be ſuſpected, need not be feared. Much leſs need the true Believer be apprehenſive of the Failure of my Kindneſs. An *univerſal* Extinction of thoſe *ſtrongeſt* Affections of Nature, is a more ſuppoſeable Caſe; than that I ſhould ever be unmindful of my People, or regardleſs of their Intereſts.

LET this teach me alſo a more lively Senſe of the *Divine Preſence.*—All the rolling Worlds above; all the living Atoms below; together with all the Beings that intervene, betwixt theſe wide Extremes; are Vouchers for an ever-preſent Deity. "GOD has not left Himſelf without Witneſs." The Marks of his Footſteps are evident in every Place, and the Touches of his Finger diſtinguiſhable in every Creature. "*Thy Name is ſo nigh*, O Thou all-ſupporting, "all-informing LORD; *and that do thy wonderous Works declare**. Thy Goodneſs warms "in the Morning Sun, and refreſhes in the "Evening Breeze. Thy Glory ſhines in the "Lamps of Midnight, and ſmiles in the Bloſſoms of Spring. We ſee a *Trace* of thy incomprehenſible Grandeur, in the *boundleſs* "Extent of Things; and a *Sketch* of thy exquiſite Skill, in thoſe almoſt *evaneſcent* Sparks "of Life, the Inſect Race."—How ſtupid is this Heart of mine, that, amidſt ſuch a Multitude of Remembrancers, thronging on every Side, I ſhould forget Thee a ſingle Moment! Grant me, Thou great I AM; Thou Source, and Support, of univerſal Exiſtence—O! grant me an enlightened Eye, to *diſcern* Thee in every Object;

* Pſal. lxxv. 2.

Object; and a devout Heart, to *adore* Thee on every Occaſion. Inſtead of living without GOD in the World; may I be ever with Him, and ſee all Things full of Him!

——*The glitt'ring Stars,*
*By the deep Ear of Meditation heard,*
*Still in their Midnight Watches ſing of* HIM.
*He nods a Calm. The Tempeſt blows his Wrath.*
*The Thunder is his Voice; and the red Flaſh*
*His ſpeedy Sword of Juſtice. At his Touch*
*The Mountains flame. He ſhakes the ſolid Earth,*
*And rocks the Nations. Nor in theſe alone,*
*In* ev'ry common Inſtance *GOD is ſeen.*
THOMSON's Spring.

IF the beautiful Spangles, which a clear Night pours on the Beholder's Eye: if thoſe other Fires, which beam in remoter Skies; and are diſcoverable only by, that Revelation to the Sight, the Teleſcope: if all thoſe *bright Millions*, are ſo many Fountains of Day; enriched with native and independent Luſtre; illuminating Planets, and enlivening Syſtems of their own*: What Pomp, how majeſtic and ſplendid,

* Conſult with Reaſon, Reaſon will reply,
Each *lucid Point*, which glows in yonder Sky,
Informs

ſplendid, is diſcloſed in the Midnight Scene! What *Riches* are diſſeminated, through all thoſe numberleſs Provinces of the great JEHOVAH'S Empire!—Grandeur beyond Expreſſion!—Yet, there is not the meaneſt Slave, but carries *greater* Wealth in his own Boſom, poſſeſſes *ſuperior* Dignity in his own Perſon. The *Soul*, that informs his Clay;—the Soul, that teaches him to think, and enables him to chooſe; that qualifies him to reliſh rational Pleaſure, and to breathe ſublime Deſire*;—the Soul, that is endowed with ſuch noble Faculties; and, above all, is diſtinguiſhed with the *dreadful*, the *glorious* Capacity, of being pained, or bleſſed, for ever—this Soul ſurpaſſes in Worth, whatever the Eye can ſee; whatever, of material, the Fancy can imagine. Before one ſuch intellectual Being, all the Treaſure, and all the Magnificence of unintelligent Creation, becomes

Informs a *Syſtem* in the boundleſs Space,
And fills, with Glory, its appointed Place:
With Beams unborrow'd, brightens other Skies;
And Worlds, to Thee unknown, with Heat and Life ſupplies. *The Univerſe.*

* In *this* reſpect, as veſted with ſuch Capacities, the Soul even of fallen Men, has an unqueſtionable Greatneſs and Dignity; is *majeſtic, though in Ruin.*

comes poor and contemptible *. For this Soul, Omnipotence itſelf has waked, and worked, through every Age. To *convince* this Soul, the fundamental Laws of Nature have been controuled; and the moſt amazing Miracles, have alarmed all the Ends of the Earth. To *inſtruct* this Soul, the Wiſdom of Heaven has been transfuſed into the ſacred Page; and Miſſionaries have been ſent from the Great King, who reſides in Light unapproachable. To *ſanctify* this Soul, the Almighty Comforter takes the Wings of a Dove; and, with a ſweet transforming Influence, broods on the human Heart. And O! to *redeem* this Soul from Guilt; to reſcue it from Hell; the Heaven of Heavens was bowed, and GOD himſelf came down to dwell in Duſt.

LET

* I beg leave to tranſcribe a pertinent Paſſage, from that celebrated Maſter of Reaſon, and univerſal Literature, Dr. *Bentley*; whom no one can be tempted to ſuſpect, either tinctured with Enthuſiaſm, or warped to Bigotry.—" If we conſider, ſays he, the Dignity of an in-" telligent Being, and put that in the Scale againſt brute " and inanimate Matter, we may affirm, without over-" valuing human Nature, that the Soul of one virtuous " and religious Man is of greater Worth and Excellen-" cy, than the Sun, and his Planets, and all the Stars in " the World."

See his Sermons at *Boyle*'s Lect. N° 8.

LET me pauſe, a while, upon this important Subject.—What are the Schemes, which engage the Attention of eminent Stateſmen, and mighty Monarchs, compared with the grand Intereſts of an Immortal Soul? The Support of Commerce, and the Succeſs of Armies, though extremely weighty Affairs; yet, if laid in the Balance againſt the Salvation of a Soul, are lighter than the downy Feather, poiſed againſt Talents of Gold. To ſave a Navy from *Shipwreck*, or a Kingdom from *Slavery*, are Deliverances of the moſt momentous Nature, which the Tranſactions of Mortality can admit. But O! how they ſhrink into an inconſiderable Trifle, if (their Aſpect upon Immortality forgot) they are ſet in Competition with the Delivery of a ſingle Soul, from the Anguiſh and Horrors of a *diſtreſſed Eternity* *!

IS ſuch the Importance of the Soul! What Vigilance then can be *too much*; or rather what holy Solicitude can be *ſufficient*; for the Overſeers of the Saviour's Flock, and the Guardians of this great, this venerable, this invaluable Charge?—Since, ſuch is the Importance of the Soul;

* Not all yon Luminaries quench'd at once
Were half ſo ſad, as one benighted Mind,
Which gropes for Happineſs, and meets Deſpair.
*Night Thoughts*, N° IX.

diſtant Suns, and their circling Retinue of Worlds! Could I pry with *Newton*'s piercing Sagacity, or launch into his extenſive Surveys: even then, my Apprehenſions would be little better, than thoſe dim and ſcanty Images, which the *Mole*, juſt emerged from her Cavern, receives on her feeble Optic.—This, ſure, ſhould repreſs all impatient or immoderate Ardor to pry into the Secrets of the Starry Structures; and make me more particularly careful, to cultivate my Heart. To fathom the Depths of the Divine Eſſence; or to ſcan univerſal Nature, with a critical Exactneſs; is an Attempt, which ſets the *acuteſt Philoſopher*, very nearly on a Level with *the Idiot*. Since it is almoſt, if not altogether, as impracticable by the former, as by the latter.

Be it, then, my chief Study, not to purſue, what is abſolutely unattainable; but rather to ſeek, what is obvious to find; eaſy to be acquired; and of ineſtimable Advantage, when poſſeſſed. O! let me ſeek *that Charity*, which edifieth*; *that Faith*, which purifieth. Love, humble

* 1 *Cor.* viii. 1. I need not inform my Reader, that in this Text; in that admirable Chapter, 1 *Cor.* xiii. and in various other Paſſages of Scripture; the Word *Charity*, ſhould by no means be confined to the peculiar Act of *Alms-*

humble Love, not conceited Science, keeps the Door of Heaven. Faith, a child-like Faith in JESUS; not the haughty ſelf-ſufficient Spirit, which ſcorns to be ignorant of any Thing; preſents a Key * to thoſe Abodes of Bliſs.—This preſent State, is the Scene deſtined to the *Exerciſe* of *Devotion*; the inviſible World, is the Place appointed for the *Enjoyment* of *Knowledge*. There, the Dawn of our infantile Minds, will be advanced to the Maturity of perfect Day; or rather, there our midnight Shades, will be brightened into all the Luſtre of Noon. There, the Souls which come from the School of Faith and bring with them the Principles of Love, will dwell in Light itſelf; will be obſcured with



*Alms-giving*, or external Beneficence. It is of a much more exalted and extenſive Nature. It ſignifies that divinely precious Grace, which warms the Soul with *ſupreme Love* to GOD, and inlarges it with *diſintereſted Affection* for Men. Which renders it the reigning Care of the Life, and chief Delight of the Heart, to promote the Happineſs of the One, and the Glory of the Other.—*This, this*, is that Charity of which ſo many excellent Things are every where ſpoken. Which can never be too highly extolled, or too earneſtly coveted, ſince it is the Image of GOD, and the very Spirit of Heaven.

* The Righteouſneſs of CHRIST. This is what MILTON beautifully ſtiles;

*... The golden Key,*
*That opes the Palace of Eternity.*

no Darkneſs at all; will know, even as they are known *.—Such an Acquaintance, therefore, do I deſire to form, and to carry on ſuch a Correſpondence, with the heavenly Bodies; as may ſhed a benign Influence on the Seeds of Grace, implanted in my Breaſt. Let the exalted Tracts of the Firmament, ſink my Soul into *deep Humiliation*. Let thoſe eternal Fires, kindle in my Heart an *adoring Gratitude*, to their Almighty Sovereign. Let yonder ponderous and enormous Globes, which reſt on his ſupporting Arm; teach me an *unſhaken Affiance*, in their incarnate Maker. Then ſhall I be—if not wiſe as the Aſtronomical Adept, yet WISE UNTO SALVATION.

HAVING now walked and worſhipped, in this *univerſal Temple*, that is arched with Skies; emblazed with Stars; and extended even to Immenſity—Having caſt an Eye, like the inraptured Patriarch †; an Eye of *Reaſon* and *Devotion*, through the magnificent Scene. With the former, having diſcovered an Infinitude of Worlds; and with the latter, having met the Deity in every View—Having beheld, as *Moſes* in the flaming Buſh, a *Glimpſe* of JEHOVAH's Excel-

* 1 Cor. xiii. 12. † Gen. xv. 5.

Excellencies! reflected from the ſeveral Planets, and ſtreaming from Myriads of celeſtial Luminaries—Having read various Leſſons, in that ſtupendous *Book* of *Wiſdom* *, where unmeaſurable Sheets of Azure compoſe the Page; and Orbs of Radiance write, in everlaſting Characters, a *Comment* on our Creed—What remains, but that I cloſe the midnight Solemnity, as our LORD concluded his grand Sacramental Inſtitution with a *Song* of *Praiſe?*—And behold a Hymn, ſuited to the ſublime Occaſion; indited by † Inſpiration itſelf; transferred into our Language, by ‡ one of the happieſt Efforts of human Ingenuity.

*The ſpacious Firmament on high,*
*With all the blue ethereal Sky,*
*And ſpangled Heav'ns, a ſhining Frame,*
*Their great Original proclaim:*
*Th' unweary'd Sun from Day to Day,*
*Does his Creator's Pow'r diſplay;*
*And publiſhes, to ev'ry Land,*
*The Work of an Almighty Hand.*



* —— For Heaven
Is as *the Book of* GOD before thee ſet,
Wherein to read his wondrous Works.—MILT.

† Pſal. xix.

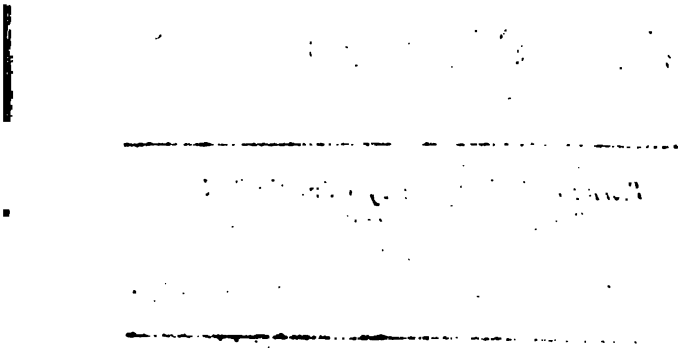
‡ ADDISON, *Spect.* Vol. VI. N° 465.

no Darkneſs at all; will know, e
are known *.—Such an Acqu le;
fore, do I deſire to form, an ,
a Correſpondence, with th
as may ſhed a benign Inf *her burn,*
Grace, implanted in n urn,
alted Tracts of the roll,
into *deep Humiliatio from Pole to Pole.*
kindle in my H
their Almighty , *in ſolemn Silence, all*
ous and eno *the dark terreſtrial Ball?*
ſupporting *though, nor real Voice nor Sound*
in their i *their radiant Orbs be found?*
not wi *Reaſon's Ear they all rejoice,*
UNT *And utter forth a glorious Voice,*
*For ever ſinging, as they ſhine,*
The Hand that made Us, is divine.

A

# WINTER-PIECE.

*Storms and Tempeſts may* calm *the Soul*
*—Snow and Ice be taught to* warm *the*
*Heart, and praiſe the Creator.*
Anonym. Lett. to the Author. See p. 274.



THE

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*INtroduction—Shortneſs of the Winter's Day—Inceſſant Rain, producing a Flood—Tempeſt; 's Effects; at Land, by Sea—Pitchy Darkneſs; iding in it—Thick Rime—Keen Froſt, and Seenity of Weather—Severe Cold, and piercing Vinds—Deep Snow—General Thaw—Evergreens—Storm of Hail—Rainbow.*

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ſure; and bends the Boughs, with Loads of delicious Fruit. He furniſhes his hoſpitable Board with preſent Plenty, and prepares a copious Magazine for future Wants.—But, is it *only* in theſe ſmiling Periods of the Year, that GOD, the all-gracious GOD is ſeen? Has *Winter*, ſtern Winter, no Tokens of his Preſence? Yes: All Things are eloquent of his Praiſe. "His Way is in the Whirlwind." Storms and Tempeſts fulfil his Word, and extol his Power. Even piercing Froſts bear Witneſs to his Goodneſs; while they bid the ſhivering Nations, tremble at his Wrath.—Be Winter then, for a while, our Theme *. Perhaps, thoſe *barren* Scenes, may be *fruitful* of intellectual Improvement. Perhaps, that rigorous Cold, which binds the Earth in icy Chains; may ſerve to

* A Sketch of this Nature, I muſt acknowledge, is quite different from the Subject of the Book; and, I cannot but declare, was as far diſtant from the Thoughts of the Author. But, the Deſire of *ſeveral* Acquaintance, together with an Intimation of its Uſefulneſs, by a very *polite Letter* from an *unknown* Hand (which has *undeſignedly* furniſhed me with the beſt Motto, I could recollect), prevailed with me to add a few deſcriptive Touches and improving Hints, on what is ſo often experienced in the Northern Regions. I hope, the Attempt I have made to oblige theſe Gentlemen, will obtain the *Approbation*, or at leaſt, the *Excuſe*, of my other Readers.

to inlarge our Hearts, and warm them with holy Love.

SEE! how the *Day* is *ſhortened!* — The Sun, detained in fairer Climes, or engaged in more agreeable Services, riſes, like an unwilling Viſitant, with tardy and reluctant Steps. He walks, with a ſhy Indifference, along the Edges of the Southern Sky; caſting an oblique Glance, he juſt looks upon our dejected World; and ſcarcely ſcatters Light, through the thick Air. Dim is his Appearance, languid are his Gleams, while he continues. Or, if He chance to wear a brighter Aſpect, and a cloudleſs Brow; yet, like the Young and Gay in the Houſe of Mourning, He ſeems uneaſy, till He is gone; is in Haſte to depart.—And let Him depart. Why ſhould we wiſh for his longer Stay; ſince He can ſhew us nothing, but the Creation in Diſtreſs? The flowery Families lie dead, and the tuneful Tribes are ſtruck dumb. The Trees, ſtript of their Verdure, and laſhed by Storms, ſpread their naked Arms to the enraged and relentleſs Heavens. Fragrance no longer floats in the Air; but chilling Damps hover, or cutting Gales blow. Nature, diveſted of all her beautiful Robes, ſits, like a forlorn diſconſolate Widow, in her Weeds. While Winds, in doleful

doleful Accents, howl; and Rains, in repeated Showers, weep.

We regret not, therefore, the ſpeedy Departure of the Day. When the Room is hung with *funeral Black*, and diſmal Objects are all around; who would deſire to have the *glimmering Taper* kept alive? Which can only diſcover Spectacles of Sorrow; can only make the Horror viſible.—And, ſince this mortal Life is little better than a continual Conflict with Sin, or an unremitted Struggle with Miſery; is it not a *gracious* Ordination, which has reduced our Age to a *Span?* Fourſcore Years of Trial, for the Virtuous, are ſufficiently long; and more than ſuch a Term, allowed to the Wicked, would render them beyond all Meaſure vile. Our Way to the Kingdom of Heaven, lies through Tribulations. Shall we then *accuſe*, ſhall we not rather *bleſs*, the Providence, which has made the Paſſage ſhort? Soon, ſoon we croſs the Vale of Tears; and then arrive on the happy Hills, where Light for ever ſhines, where Joy for ever ſmiles.

Sometimes, the Day is rendered ſhorter ſtill; is almoſt blotted out from the Year *. The

* Involvere Diem Nimbi & *Nox humida* Cœlum
Abſtulit— Virg.

The Vapours gather; they thicken into an impenetrable Gloom; and obſcure the Face of the Sky. At length, the *Rains* deſcend. The Sluices of the Firmament are opened; and the low-hung Clouds pour their congregated Stores. Copious and unintermitted, ſtill they pour; and ſtill are unexhauſted. The Waters drop inceſſantly from the Eaves, and ruſh in rapid Streams from theſe Spouts. They roar along the channelled Pavements, and ſtand in foul Shallows amidſt the Village-Streets. Now, if the inattentive Eye, or negligent Hand, has left the Roof but ſcantily covered; the inſinuating Element finds its Way into every Flaw, and oozing through the Cieling, at once upbraids and chaſtiſes the careleſs Inhabitant. The Ploughman, ſoaked to the Skin, leaves his half-tilled Acre. The poor Poultry, dripping with Wet, croud into Shelter. The Tenants of the Bough fold up their Wings, afraid to launch into the ſtreaming Air. The Beaſts, joyleſs and diſpirited, ruminate under their Sheds. The Roads ſwim, and the Brooks ſwell.—The *River*, amidſt all this watry Ferment, long contained itſelf within its appointed Bounds. But, ſwollen by innumerable Currents; and rouſed, at laſt, into uncontroulable Rage; burſts over its Banks; ſhoots into the Plain; bears down all Oppoſition;

tion; ſpreads itſelf far and wide; and buries the Meadow under a brown, ſluggiſh, ſoaking *Deluge*.

How happy for Man, that this Inundation comes, when there are no flowery Crops in the Valley, to be overwhelmed; no Fields ſtanding thick with Corn, to be laid waſte! At *ſuch* a Juncture, it would have been *Ruin* to the Huſbandman and his Family: but, *thus* timed, it yields *Manure* for his Ground, and promiſes Him *Riches* in Reverſion.—How often, and how long, has the Divine Majeſty bore with the moſt injurious Affronts from Sinners! His Goodneſs triumphed over their Perverſeneſs, and graciouſly refuſed to be exaſperated. But, O preſumtuous Creatures, multiply no longer your Provocations. Urge not, by repeated Iniquities, the Almighty Arm to ſtrike; leſt his Long-ſuffering ceaſe, and his fierce Anger break forth; break forth, like a *Flood of Waters**, and ſweep you away, into irrecoverable and everlaſting Perdition.

How mighty! how majeſtic! and O! how myſterious are thy Works, Thou GOD of Heaven, and LORD of Nature! When the Air is calm, where ſleep the *ſtormy Winds?* In what

* Hoſ. v. 10.

what Chambers are they repoſed, or in what Dungeons confined! Till Thou art pleaſed to awaken their Rage, and throw open their Priſon-Doors. Then, with irreſiſtible Impetuoſity they fly forth, ſcattering Dread, and menacing Deſtruction.

THE Atmoſphere is hurled into the moſt tumultuous Confuſion. The aereal Torrent burſts its Way over Mountains, Seas, and Continents. All Things feel the dreadful Shock. All Things tremble before the furious Blaſt. The *Foreſt*, vexed and tore, groans under the Scourge. Her ſturdy Sons are ſtrained to the very Root, and almoſt ſweep the Soil, they were wont to ſhade. The ſtubborn Oak, that diſdains to bend, is daſhed headlong to the Ground; and, with ſhattered Arms, with proſtrate Trunk, blocks the Road.—While the flexile Reed, that ſprings up in the Marſh, yielding to the Guſt (as the *meek* and pliant Temper, to Injuries; or the *reſigned* and patient Spirit, to Misfortunes); eludes the Force of the Storm, and ſurvives amidſt the wide-ſpread Havock.

FOR a Moment, the turbulent and outrageous Sky, ſeems to be aſſwaged: but, it intermits its Wrath, only to increaſe its Strength. Soon, the ſounding Squadrons of the Air return

turn to the Attack, and renew their Ravages with redoubled Fury. The ſtately Dome rocks, amidſt the wheeling Clouds. The impregnable Tower totters on its Baſis; and threatens to overwhelm, whom it was intended to protect. The ragged Rock is rent in Pieces*; and even the Hills, the perpetual Hills, on their deep Foundations, are ſcarcely ſecure.—Where, now, is the Place of Safety? When the *City* reels, and Houſes become Heaps! Sleep affrighted flies. Diverſion is turned into Horror. All is Uproar in the Element; all is Conſternation among Mortals; and nothing, but one wide Scene of rueful Devaſtation, through the Land.—Yet, this is only an *inferior* Miniſter of divine Diſpleaſure. The Executioner of *milder* Indignation. How then,—O! *how will the lofty Looks of Man be humbled, and the Haughtineſs of Man be bowed down*†; when the LORD GOD

* 1 Kings xix. 11.

† ——— *Mortalia Corda*
*Per Gentes humilis ſtravit Pavor.*—

One would almoſt imagine, that *Virgil* had read *Iſaiah*, and borrowed his Ideas from Chap. ii. Ver. 11. The *humilis* and *ſtravit* of the one, ſo exactly correſpond with the *—humbled—bowed down*—of the other. But, in one Circumſtance, the Prophet is very much ſuperior to the Poet. The Prophet, by giving a ſtriking *Contraſt* to his Sentiments, repreſents them with incomparably greater Energy.

GOD Omnipotent ſhall *meditate* Terror—when He ſhall ſet *all* his Terrors in Array—when He ariſes, to judge the Nations, and to *ſhake terribly* the Earth!

THE *Ocean* ſwells with tremendous Commotions. The ponderous Waves are heaved from their capacious Bed, and almoſt lay bare the unfathomable Deep. Flung into the moſt rapid Agitation, they ſweep over the Rocks; they laſh the lofty Cliffs; and toſs themſelves into the Clouds. Navies are rent from their Anchors; and, with all their enormous Load, are whirled, ſwift as the Arrow, wild as the Winds, along the vaſt Abyſs.—Now, they climb the rolling Mountain; they plow the frightful Ridge; and ſeem to ſkim the Skies. Anon, they plunge into the opening Gulf; they loſe the Sight of Day; and are loſt themſelves to every Eye. How vain is the Pilot's Art! How impotent the Mariner's Strength! They reel to and fro, and ſtagger in the jarring Hold; or cling to the Cordage, while burſting Seas



gy. He ſays not, *Men* in the groſs, or the *human Heart* in general: but Men of the moſt *elated* Looks; Hearts big with the moſt *arrogant* Imaginations. Even *theſe* ſhall ſtoop from their ſupercilious Heights; even *theſe* ſhall grovel in the Duſt of Abaſement, and ſhudder with all the Extremes of an abject Puſillanimity.

foam over the Deck. *Deſpair* is in every Face, and *Death* ſits threatening on every Surge.—But why, O ye aſtoniſhed Mariners, why ſhould you abandon yourſelves to Deſpair? Is the LORD's Hand *ſhortened*, becauſe the Waves of the Sea rage horribly? Is his Ear *deafened*, by the roaring Thunders, and the bellowing Tempeſt? Cry, Cry unto HIM, who "holdeth the Winds in his Fiſt, and the Waters in "the Hollow of his Hand." HE is all-gracious, to hear; and almighty, to ſave. If HE command, the Storm ſhall be huſhed to Silence: the Billows ſhall ſubſide into a Calm: the Lightnings ſhall lay their fiery Bolts aſide: and, inſtead of ſinking in a watry Grave, you ſhall find Yourſelves brought to the deſired Haven.

SOMETIMES, after a joyleſs Day, a more diſmal *Night* ſucceeds.—The lazy, louring Vapours had wove ſo thick a Veil, as the meridian Sun could ſcarcely penetrate. What Gloom then muſt overwhelm the nocturnal Hours! the Moon withdraws her Shining. Not a ſingle Star, is able to ſtruggle through the Deep Arrangement of Shades. All is *pitchy Darkneſs*, without one enlivening Ray. How ſolemn! How awful! 'Tis like the Shroud of Nature,

or

or the Return of Chaos. I don't wonder, that it is the Parent of Terrors, and ſo apt to ingender Melancholy.—Lately, the Tempeſt marked its rapid Way with *Miſchief*; now, the Night dreſſes her ſilent Pavilion with *Horror*.

I HAVE *ſometimes* left the beaming Tapers, withdrawn from the ruddy Fire, and plunged into the thickeſt of theſe ſooty Shades; without regretting the Change, rather exulting in it as a welcome Deliverance. The very Gloom was pleaſing, was exhilarating, compared with the Converſation, I quitted. The Speech of my Companions (how does it grieve me, that I ſhould *even once* have occaſion to call them by *that* Name!) was the Language of Darkneſs: was Horror to the Soul, and Torture to the Ear. —*Their Teeth were Spears and Arrows, and their Tongue a ſharp Sword*, to ſtab and aſſaſſinate, their Neighbour's Character. *Their Throat was an open Sepulchre*, gaping to devour the Reputation of the Innocent, or tainting the Air with their virulent and polluted Breath.—Sometimes, their licentious and ungovernable Diſcourſe, ſhot Arrows of *Profaneneſs* againſt Heaven itſelf; and, in proud Defiance, challenged the Reſentment of Omnipotence.—Sometimes, as if it was the Glory of human Nature, to cheriſh the *groſſeſt* Appetites of the Brute; or the Mark of a

Gentleman, to have ſerved an Apprenticeſhip in a Brothel; the filthieſt Jeſts of the Stews (if low *Obſcenity* can be a Jeſt) were nauſeouſly obtruded on the Company. All the *modeſt* Part were offended and grieved; while the other beſotted Creatures laughed aloud, though the Leproſy of Uncleanneſs appeared on their Lips.—Are not theſe Perſons *Priſoners* of *Darkneſs*; though blazing Sconces, pour artificial Day, through their Rooms? Are not their Souls immured in the moſt baleful Shades; though the Noon-tide Sun is brightened, by flaming on their gilded Chariots?—They diſcern not that great and adorable Being, who fills the Univerſe with his infinite and glorious Preſence: who is *all Eye*, to obſerve their Actions; *all Ear*, to examine their Words. They know not the all-ſufficient Redeemer, nor the unſpeakable Bleſſedneſs of his heavenly Kingdom. They are groping for the Prize of Happineſs; but will certainly graſp the Thorn of Anxiety. They are wantonly ſporting on the Brink of a Precipice; and are every Moment in Danger of falling headlong, into *irretrievable* Ruin, and *endleſs* Deſpair.

They have forced me out, and are, perhaps, deriding me in my Abſence: are charging my Reverence

Reverence for the ever-preſent GOD, and my Concern for the Dignity of our *rational* Nature, to the Account of Humour and Singularity; to Narrowneſs of Thought, or Sourneſs of Temper.—Be it ſo.—I will indulge no Indignation againſt them. If any Thing like it *ſhould* ariſe, I will convert it into Prayer—"Pity them, O "Thou Father of Mercies!—Shew them the "Madneſs of their Profaneneſs!—Shew them "the Baſeneſs of their vile Ribaldry!—Let "their diſſolute Rant be turned into ſilent Sor- "row and Confuſion. Till they open their "Lips, to adore thine *inſulted* Majeſty, and to "implore thy gracious Pardon. Till they de- "vote to thy Service, thoſe ſocial Hours, and "thoſe ſuperior Faculties, which they are now "abuſing—to the diſhonour of thy Name—to "the Contamination of their own Souls—and "(unleſs timely Repentance intervene) to their "everlaſting Infamy and Perdition."

I RIDE home amidſt the gloomy Void. All darkling and ſolitary, I can ſcarce diſcern my Horſe's Head; and only gueſs out my blind Road. *No Companion*, but Danger; or, perhaps, "Deſtruction ready at my Side*."—But, why do I fanſy myſelf *ſolitary?* Is not the Father



* Job xviii. 12.

of Lights; the GOD of my Life; the great and everlaſting Friend; always at my Right-hand? Becauſe the Day is excluded, is his Omnipreſence vacated? Though I have no earthly Acquaintance near, to aſſiſt in caſe of a Misfortune; or to beguile the Time, and divert uneaſy Suſpicions, by entertaining Conferences; may I not lay my Help upon the Almighty, and converſe with GOD by humble Supplication? For this Exerciſe, no Place is improper; no Hour unſeaſonable; and no Poſture incommodious. This is *Society*, the beſt of Society, even in Solitude. This is a Fund of Delights, eaſily portable, and quite inexhauſtible. A *Treaſure* this, of unknown Value; liable to no Hazard, from Wrong or Robbery; but perfectly ſecure, to the lonely Wanderer, in the moſt darkſome Paths.

AND why ſhould I diſtreſs myſelf with Apprehenſions of *Peril?* This Acceſs to GOD, is not only an indefeaſible Privilege, but a kind of *ambulatory Garriſon*. Thoſe, who make known their Requeſts unto GOD, and rely upon his protecting Care; He gives *his Angels* Charge over their Welfare. His Angels are commiſſioned, to eſcort them in their Travelling; and to hold up their Goings, that they daſh not their Foot againſt a Stone *. Nay, *He*

* Pſal. xci. 11, 12.

*He Himſelf* condeſcends to be their Guardian, and "keeps all their Bones, ſo that not one of "them is broken."—Between theſe Perſons, and the moſt miſchievous Objects, a Treaty of Peace is concluded. The Articles of this grand Alliance, are recorded in the Book of Revelation; and will, when it is for the real Benefit of Believers, aſſuredly be made good, in the Adminiſtrations of Providence. *In that Day*, ſaith the LORD, *will I make a Covenant for them with the Beaſts of the Field, and with the Fowls of Heaven, and with the creeping Things of the Ground*; and they *ſhall be in League with the Stones of the Field**. Though they fall headlong on the Flints; even the Flints, fitted to fracture the Skull, ſhall receive them as into the Arms of Friendſhip; and not offer to hurt, whom the LORD is pleaſed to preſerve.

MAY I then enjoy the Preſence of this gracious GOD, and Darkneſs and Light ſhall be both alike. Let HIM whiſper Peace to my Conſcience; and this dread Silence ſhall be more charming, than the Voice of Eloquence, or the Strains of Muſic. Let HIM reveal his raviſhing Perfections in my Soul; and I ſhall not want the ſaffron Beauties of the Morn, the



* Job v. 23. Hoſ. ii. 18.

golden Glories of Noon, or the impurpled Evening Sky. I ſhall ſigh only for thoſe moſt deſirable and diſtinguiſhed Realms; where, the Light of HIS Countenance *perpetually* ſhines, and conſequently—" there is * no Night there."

How ſurpriſing are the Alterations of Nature! I left her, the preceding Evening, plain and unadorned. But, now, a *thick Rime* has ſhed its hoary Honours over all. It has ſhagged the Fleeces of the Sheep, and criſped the Traveller's Locks. The Hedges are richly fringed, and all the Ground is profuſely powdered. The downward Branches are taſſeled with Silver, and the upright are feathered with the plumy Wave.

THE *Fine*, are not always the *Valuable*. The Air, amidſt all theſe gaudy Decorations, is charged with chilling and *unwholſome* Damps. The raw hazy Influence ſpreads wide; ſits deep; hangs heavy and oppreſſive on the Springs of Life. A liſtleſs Languor clogs the animal Functions; and the purple Stream glides but faintly through its Channels. In vain, the Ruler of the Day exerts his beaming Powers: In vain, He attempts to diſperſe this Inſurrection of Vapours. The ſullen, malignant Cloud refuſes

* Rev. xxi. 25.

fuſes to depart. It envelops the World, and *intercepts* the *Proſpect*. I look abroad for the neighbouring Village; I ſend my Eye in queſt of the riſing Turret; but am ſcarce able to diſcern the very next Houſe. Where are the blue Arches of Heaven? Where is the radiant Countenance of the Sun? Where the boundleſs Scenes of Creation? Loſt, loſt are their Beauties; quenched their Glories. The thronged Theatre of the Univerſe, ſeems an empty Void; and all its elegant Pictures, an undiſtinguiſhed Blank.—Thus would it have been with our intellectual Views, if the *Goſpel* had not come in to our Relief. We ſhould have known, neither our true Good, nor real Evil. We had been a Riddle to ourſelves; the preſent State all Confuſion, and the future impenetrable Darkneſs. But, the Sun of Righteouſneſs, ariſing with potent and triumphant Beams, has diſſipated the interpoſing Cloud. Has opened a Proſpect, more beautiful, than the Bloſſoms of Spring; more chearing, than the Treaſures of Autumn; and far more inlarged, than the Extent of the viſible Syſtem. Which, having led the Eye of the Mind, through Fields of Grace, over Rivers of Righteouſneſs, and Hills crowned with Knowledge; terminates, at length, in the Heavens; ſweetly loſing itſelf, in Regions of infinite Bliſs, and endleſs Glory.

As

As I walk along the Fog, it ſeems, at ſome little Diſtance, to be almoſt ſolid Gloom; ſuch as would ſhut out every Glimpſe of Light, and totally impriſon me in Obſcurity. But, when I approach, and enter it; I find myſelf agreeably miſtaken, and the Miſt much *thinner*, than it *appeared*.—Such is the Caſe, with regard to the *Sufferings* of the preſent Life; they are not, when experienced, ſo dreadful, as a timorous Imagination ſurmiſed. Such alſo is the Caſe, with reference to the *Gratifications* of *Senſe*; they prove not, when enjoyed, ſo ſubſtantial, as a ſanguine Expectation repreſented. In both Inſtances, we are graciouſly diſappointed. The keen Edge of the Calamity is blunted, that it may not wound us with incurable Anguiſh: the exquiſite Reliſh of the Proſperity is palled, that it may not captivate our Affections, and enſlave them to inferior Delights.

Sometimes, the Face of Things wears a more pleaſing Form; the very Reverſe of the foregoing. The ſober Evening advances, to cloſe the ſhort-lived Day. The Firmament, clear and unſullied, puts on its brighteſt Blue. The Stars, in thronging Multitudes, and with a peculiar Brillancy, glitter thro' the fair Expanſe. While the *Froſt* pours its ſubtle and penetrating

penetrating Influence, all around. Sharp and intenſely ſevere, all the long Night, the rigid Æther continues its Operations. When, late and ſlow, the Morning opens her pale Eye; in what a curious and amuſing Diſguiſe, is Nature dreſſed! The Icicles, jagged and uneven, are pendent on the Houſes. A whitiſh Film incruſts the windows, where mimic Landſcapes riſe, and fanſied Figures ſwell. The fruitful Fields are hardened to Iron; the moiſtened Meadows are congealed to Marble; and both reſound (an Effect unknown before) with the Peaſant's haſty Tread. The Stream is arreſted in its Career, and its everflowing Surface chained to the Banks. The fluid Paths become a ſolid Road; where the finny Shoals were wont to rove, the ſportive Youth ſlide, or the rattling Chariots roll*. And (what would ſeem, to an Inhabitant of the Southern World, as unaccountable as the deepeſt Myſteries of our Religion) that very ſame Breath of Heaven, which *cements* the Lakes into a cryſtal Pavement; *cleaves* the Oaks, as it were with inviſible Wedges; "*breaks* in Pieces the Northern "Iron,

* *Undaque jam tergo ferratos ſuſtinet orbes,*
*Puppibus illa prius patulis, nunc hoſpita plauſtris.*
*Æraque diſſiliunt vulgo,* VIRG.

"Iron, and the Steel;" even while it *builds* a Bridge of Icy Rock, over the Seas*.

THE Air is all Serenity. Refined by the nitrous Particles, it affords the moſt diſtinct Views, and extenſive Proſpects. The Seeds of *Infection* are killed; and the *Peſtilence* deſtroyed, even in Embryo. So, the Cold of *Affliction* tends to mortify our Corruptions, and ſubdue our vicious Habits.—The crouding Atmoſphere conſtringes our Bodies, and braces our Nerves. The Spirits are buoyant, and ſally briſkly on the Execution of their Office. In the Summer-Months, ſuch an unclouded Sky, and ſo bright a Sun, would have melted us with Heat, and ſoftened us into Supineneſs. We ſhould have been ready to throw our Limbs under the ſpreading Beach, and to lie at Eaſe by the murmuring Brook. But, now, none loiters in his Path; none is ſeen with folded Arms. All is in Motion; all is Activity. Choice, prompted by the Weather, ſupplies the

* *Job* xxxviii. 30. *The Waters are hid,* locked up from the Cattle's Lips, and ſecured from the Fiſher's Net, *as* Wells were wont to be cloſed *with a* ponderous and impenetrable *Stone*. *And* not only Lakes and Rivers, but *the Surface of the* great *Deep*, with its reſtleſs and uncontroulable Surges, *is taken Captive* יתלכד by the Froſt, and bound in ſhining Fetters.

the Spur of Neceſſity. Thus, the *rugged* School of Misfortune, often trains up the Mind, to a vigorous Exertion of its Faculties. The *bleak* Climate of *Adverſity*, often inſpirits us with a manly Reſolution. When a ſoft and downy Affluence, perhaps, would have relaxed all the generous Spring of the Soul; and have left it enervated with Pleaſure, or diſſolved in Indolence.

"*COLD* cometh out of the North." The Winds, having ſwept thoſe Deſarts of Snow, arm themſelves with Millions of frozen Particles, and make a fierce Deſcent upon our Iſle. Under black and ſcowling Clouds, they drive, dreadfully whizzing, through the darkened Air. They growl around our Houſes; aſſault our Doors; and, eager for Entrance, faſten on our Windows. Walls can ſcarce reſtrain them; Bars are unable to exclude them; through every Cranny they force their Way. Ice is on their Wings; they ſcatter Agues through the Land; and Winter, all Winter, rages as they go. Their Breath is as a ſearing * Iron to the little Verdure,

* This, I ſuppoſe, is the Meaning of that figurative Expreſſion, uſed by the Prophet *Habakkuk*; who, ſpeaking of the *Chaldæans* invading *Judæa*, ſays—*Their Faces*, or

Verdure, left in the Plains. Vaſtly more pernicious to the tender Plants, than the ſharpeſt Knife; they kill their Branches, and wound the very Root. Let not the Corn venture to peep too freely from the Entrenchment of the Furrow; let not the fruit-bearing Bloſſoms dare to come abroad, from their Lodgment in the Bark; leſt theſe murderous Blaſts intercept and ſeize the unwary Strangers, and deſtroy the Hopes of the advancing Year.

O, 'tis ſeverely cold! Who is ſo hardy, as not to ſhrink at this *exceſſively pinching* Weather? See! Every Face is pale. Even the blooming Cheeks contract a gelid Hue; and the Teeth hardly forbear chattering.—Ye that ſit eaſy and joyous, amidſt your commodious Apartments, ſolacing yourſelves in the diffuſive Warmth of your Fire; be mindful of your Brethren, in the chearleſs Tenement of Poverty. *Their* ſhattered Panes are open to the piercing Winds; a tattered Garment, ſcarcely covers their ſhivering Fleſh; while a few faint and dying Embers on the ſqualid Hearth, rather mock their Wiſhes, than

or the Incurſions they make, *ſhall ſup up*, ſhall ſwallow greedily, ſhall devour utterly, the Inhabitants of the Country, and their valuable Effects; *as the* keen, corroding Blaſts of the *Eaſt-Wind*, deſtroy every green Thing in the Field. *Hab.* i. 9.

than warm their Limbs.—While the generous Juices of *Oporto*, ſparkle in your Glaſſes; or the Streams, beautifully tinged and deliciouſly flavoured with the *Chineſe* Leaf, ſmoak in the elegant Porcelain: O remember, that many of your Fellow-Creatures, amidſt all the Rigour of theſe inclement Skies, are emaciated with Sickneſs; benumbed with Age; and pining with Hunger. Let "their Loins bleſs you," for comfortable Cloathing. Reſtore them with Medicine; regale them with Food; and baffle the raging Year. So, may you never know any of their Diſtreſſes, but only by the Hearing of the Ear; the Seeing of the Eye; or the Feeling of a tender Commiſeration!—Methinks, the bitter bluſtering Winds plead for the poor Indigents. May they breathe Pity into *your* Breaſts; while they blow Hardſhips into *their* Huts!—Obſerve thoſe blue Flames, and ruddy Coals, in your Chimney: quickened by the Cold, they look more lively, and glow more ſtrongly. Silent, but ſeaſonable Admonition to the gay Circle, that chat and ſmile around them! *Thus*, may your Hearts, at ſuch a Juncture of Need, kindle into a peculiar Benevolence! Detain not your ſuperfluous Piles of Wood. Let them haſten to the Relief of the ſtarving Family. Bid them expire in many a willing

a willing Blaze, to mitigate the Severity of the Seaſon, and chear the bleak Abodes of Want. So ſhall they aſcend, mingled with Thankſgivings to GOD, and ardent Prayers for your Welfare—aſcend, more grateful to Heaven, than Columns of the moſt coſtly Incenſe.

Now the Winds ceaſe. Having brought their Load, they are diſmiſſed from Service. They have wafted an immenſe Cargo of Clouds, which empty themſelves in *Snow*. At firſt, a few ſcattered Shreds come wandering down the ſaddened Sky. This ſlight Skirmiſh is ſucceeded by a general Onſet. The Flakes, large, and numerous, and thick-wavering, deſcend. They dim the Air, and haſten the Approach of Night. Through all the Night, in ſofteſt Silence, and with a continual Flow, this fleecy Shower falls. In the Morning, when we awake, what a ſurpriſing Change appears!—Is this the ſame World? Here is no Diverſity of Colour! I can hardly diſtinguiſh the Trees, from the Hills on which they grow. Which are the Meadows, and which the Plains? Where are the green Paſtures, and where the fallow Lands? All Things lie blended in bright Confuſion. So bright, that it heightens the Splendor of Day, and even dazles the Organs of Sight.—

The

The Lawn is not ſo fair, as this ſnowy Mantle, which inveſts the Fields; and even the Lily, was the Lily to appear, would look tarniſhed in its Preſence. I can think of but *one* Thing, which *excels* or equals the glittering Robe of Winter. Is any Perſon deſirous to know my Meaning? He may find it explained in that admirable Hymn*, compoſed by the Royal Penitent. Is any deſirous to poſſeſs this matchleſs Ornament? He will find it offered to his Acceptance, in every Page of the Goſpel.

SEE! (for the Eye cannot ſatisfy itſelf, without viewing again and again the curious, the delicate Scene) See! how the Hedges are habited, like ſpotleſs Veſtals! The Houſes are roofed with Uniformity and Luſtre. The Meadows are covered with a Carpet of the fineſt Ermine†. The Groves bow, beneath the lovely Burden: and all, all below, is one wide, immenſe, ſhining Waſte of White. — By deep Snows,



* Can any Thing be whiter than Snow? Yes, ſaith *David*; if GOD be pleaſed to waſh me from my Sins in the Blood of CHRIST, *I ſhall be even whiter than ſnow.* Pſal. li. 7. See Pages 152, 153.

† This Animal is Milk-white. As for thoſe *black Spots*, which We generally ſee, in Linings of Ermine, they are added by the Furrier. In order to diverſify the Appearance, or heighten the Beauty, of the native Colour.

and heavy Rains, GOD *ſealeth up the Hand of every Man.* And for this Purpoſe, adds our ſacred Philoſopher, *that all Men may know his Work**. He confines them within their Doors, and puts a Stop to their ſecular Buſineſs; that they may conſider the Things, which belong to their ſpiritual Welfare. That, having a Vacation from their ordinary Employ, they may obſerve the Works of his Power, and become acquainted with the Myſteries of his Grace.

And worthy, worthy of all Obſervation, are the Works of the great Creator. They are prodigiouſly various, and perfectly amazing. How pliant and ductile is Nature, under his forming Hand! At his Command, the ſelf-ſame Subſtance aſſumes the moſt different Shapes; and is transformed into an endleſs Multiplicity of Figures. If HE ordains, the Water is *moulded* into Hail, and diſcharged upon the Earth like a Volley of Shot; or, it is *conſolidated* into Ice, and defends the Rivers, "as it were with a Breaſt-plate." At the bare Intimation of his Will, the very ſame Element is ſcattered in Hoar-Froſt, like a Sprinkling of the moſt *attenuated* Aſhes; or, is ſpread over the Surface of the Ground, in theſe Couches of ſwelling and *flaky* Down.

The Snow, however it may carry the Appearance of Cold, affords a *warm* Garment for the

* Job xxxvii. 7.

the Corn; ſcreens it from nipping Froſts, and cheriſhes its infant Growth. It will abide for a while, to exert a protecting Care, and exerciſe a foſtering Influence. Then, touched by the Sun, or thawed by a ſoftening Gale; the furry Veſture, melts into genial Moiſture; ſinks deep into the Soil, and ſaturates its Pores with the diſſolving Nitre: repleniſhing the Glebe with thoſe Principles of vegetative Life, which will open into the Bloom of Spring, and ripen into the Fruits of Autumn.—Beautiful Emblem this, and comfortable Repreſentation of the Divine *Word*; both in the ſucceſsful, and advantageous Iſſue of its Operation! *As the Rain cometh down, and the Snow from Heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the Earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give Seed to the Sower, and Bread to the Eater: So ſhall my Word be, that goeth forth out of my Mouth: it ſhall not return unto me void, but ſhall accompliſh that which I pleaſe, and it ſhall proſper in the Thing whereunto I ſent it* *.

NATURE, at length, puts off her lucid Veil. She drops it, in a trickling *Thaw*. The looſened Snow, rolls in Sheets from the Houſes. Various Openings ſpot the Hills; which, even while we look, become larger, and more numerous. The



* Iſa. lv. 10, 11.

Trees rid themſelves, by Degrees, of the hoary Incumbrance. Shook from the ſpringing Boughs, Part falls heavy to the Ground, Part flies abroad in ſhining Atoms. Our Fields and Gardens, lately buried beneath the drifted Heaps, riſe plain and diſtinct to View.—Since we ſee Nature once again, has ſhe no verdant Traces, no beautiful Features, left? They are, like real Friends, very rare; and therefore the more particularly to be regarded, the more highly to be valued.—Here and there, the *Holly* hangs out her glowing Berries; the *Lauruſtinus* ſpreads her graceful Tufts; and both, under a Covert of unfading Foliage.—The plain, but hardy *Ivy* cloaths the decrepit, crazy Wall; nor ſhrinks from the friendly Office, tho' the Skies frown, and the Storm roars.—The *Laurel*, firm, erect, and bold, expands its Leaf of vivid Green. In ſpite of the united, the repeated Attacks of Wind, and Rain, and Froſt, it preſerves an undiſmayed lively Look; and maintains its Poſt, while withering Millions fall around. Worthy, by vanquiſhing the rugged Force of Winter, worthy to adorn the triumphant Conqueror's Brow.—Nor muſt I forget the *Bay-tree*; which ſcorns to be a mean Penſioner, on a few tranſient ſunny Gleams; or, with a ſervile Obſequiouſneſs, to vary its Appearance, in Conformity to the changing Seaſons.

Seaſons. By ſuch Indications of ſterling Worth, and ſtaunch Reſolution, reading a Lecture to the Poet's Genius; while it weaves the Chaplet for his Temples.—Theſe, and a few other Plants, clad with native Verdure, retain their comely Aſpect, in the bleakeſt Climes, and in the coldeſt Months.

Such, and ſo durable, are the Accompliſhments of a *refined* Underſtanding, and an *amiable* Temper. The tawdry Ornaments of Dreſs, which catch the unthinking Vulgar, ſoon become inſipid and deſpicable. The rubied Lip, and the roſy Cheek fade. Even the ſparkling Wit *, as well as the ſparkling Eye, pleaſe but



* "How little does God eſteem the Things that Men "count great; the Endowments of *Wit* and Eloquence, "that *Men* admire in ſome! Alas! how poor are they "to Him! He reſpecteth not any who are wiſe in Heart: "they are nothing, and leſs than nothing, in his Eyes. "Even *wiſe* Men admire, how little it is that Men "know; how ſmall a Matter lies under the Sound of "theſe popular Wonders, a learned Man, a great Scho- "lar, a great Stateſman. How much more doth the "all-wiſe God meanly account of Theſe! He often diſ- "covers, even to the World, their Meanneſs. He *befools* "them. So Valour, or Birth, or worldly Greatneſs, "theſe He gives, and gives as Things He makes no great "Reckoning of, to ſuch as ſhall never ſee his Face; and "calls to the Inheritance of Glory poor deſpiſed Crea- "tures, that are looked on as the *Off-ſcourings*, and *Re-* "*fuſe* of the World."

—*THUS*

for a Moment. But the virtuous Mind has Charms, which ſurvive the Decay of every inferior Embelliſhment. Charms, which add to the Fragrancy of the Flower, the *Permanency* of the *Ever-green*.

SUCH, likewiſe, is the Happineſs of the ſincerely Religious; like a Tree, ſays the inſpired Moraliſt, "whoſe Leaf ſhall not fall." He borrows not his Peace from external Circumſtances; but has a Fund within, and is "ſatisfied from himſelf*." Even though impoveriſhed by calamitous Accidents; He is rich in the *Poſſeſſion* of *Grace*, and richer in the *Hope* of *Glory*. His Joys are infinitely ſuperior to, as well as nobly independent on, the tranſitory Glow of ſenſual Delight, or the capricious Favours of, what the World calls, Fortune.

I F

—*THUS* ſays an excellent Author; who writes with the moſt amiable Spirit of Benevolence; with the moſt unaffected Air of Humility; and like the ſacred Originals, from which he copies, with a majeſtic Simplicity of Stile.—Whoſe *ſelect Works* I may venture to recommend, not only as a Treaſure, but as a Mine of genuine, ſterling, evangelical Piety.—See Page 520 of Archbiſhop LEIGHTON's *ſelect Works*, the *Edinburgh* Edition, Octavo, Which it is neceſſary to ſpecify, becauſe the *London* Edition does not contain that Part of his Writings, which has ſupplied me with the preceding *Quotation*.

* Prov. xiv. 14.

If the *Snow* compoſes the light-armed Troops of the Sky; methinks, the *Hail* conſtitutes its heavy Artillery*. When driven by a vehement Wind, with what dreadful Impetuoſity, does that ſtony Shower fall! How it rebounds from the frozen Ground, and rattles on the reſounding Dome! It attenuates the Rivers into Smoke, or ſcourges them into Foam. It cruſhes the infant Flowers; cuts in Pieces the Gardener's early Plants; and batters the feeble Fortification of his Glaſſes into Shivers. It darts into the Traveller's Face: He turns, with Haſte, from the Stroke; or feels, on his Cheek, for the guſhing Blood. If he would retreat into the Houſe, it follows him even thither; and, like a determined enemy, that puſhes the Purſuit, daſhes through the crackling Panes.— But, the fierce Attack is quickly over. The Clouds have ſoon ſpent their Shafts; ſoon unſtrung their Bow. Happy for the Inhabitants of the Earth, that a Sally ſo dreadfully *furious*, ſhould be ſo remarkably *ſhort!* What elſe could endure the Shock, or eſcape Deſtruction?



* *He caſteth forth his Ice like Morſels.* Pſal. cxlvii. 17. Which, in modern Language, might be thus expreſſed: *He poureth his Hail like a Volley of Shot.* The Word פתים, inadequately tranſlated *Morſels*, alludes I think, to thoſe *Fragments* of the Rock, or thoſe *ſmooth Stones* from the Brook, which, in the Day of Battle, the Warriors hurled from their Slings.

BUT, behold a *Bow*, of no hoſtile Intention! A Bow, painted in variegated Colours, on the diſburdened Cloud. How vaſt is the Extent, how delicate the Texture, of that *ſhowery Arch!* It compaſſeth the Heavens, with a glorious Circle; and teaches us to forget the Horrors of the Storm. Elegant its Form, and rich its Tincture; but more delightful its ſacred Significancy. While the Violet and the Roſe, bluſh in its beautiful Aſpect; the Olive-branch ſmiles in its gracious Import. It writes, in radiant Dyes, what the Angels ſung in harmonious Strains; "Peace on Earth, and Good-will towards Men." It is the Stamp of *Inſurance*, for the Continuance of Seed-Time, and Harveſt; for the Preſervation and Security of the viſible World*. It is the comfortable *Token*†, of a better State, and a happier Kingdom—a Kingdom, where Sin ſhall ceaſe, and Miſery be aboliſhed; where Storms ſhall beat, and Winter pierce no more; but Holineſs, Happineſs, and Joy, like one unbounded *Spring*, for ever, ever bloom.

* Gen. ix. 12—16. † Rev. iv. 3.

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# TABLE

OF THE

# TEXTS

*More* or *leſs* illuſtrated in this WORK.

N. B. *As Dr.* SHAW, *in the Supplement to his* Excellent *Book of Travels, and ſeveral other Authors of the* greateſt *Eminence, have given an Index of Scriptures, occaſionally Explained in their Writings; I doubt not, but I ſhall oblige* many *of my Readers, by what I* here *ſubjoin; thoſe eſpecially, whoſe Taſte is happily formed to reliſh the Beauties of the ſacred Records.*


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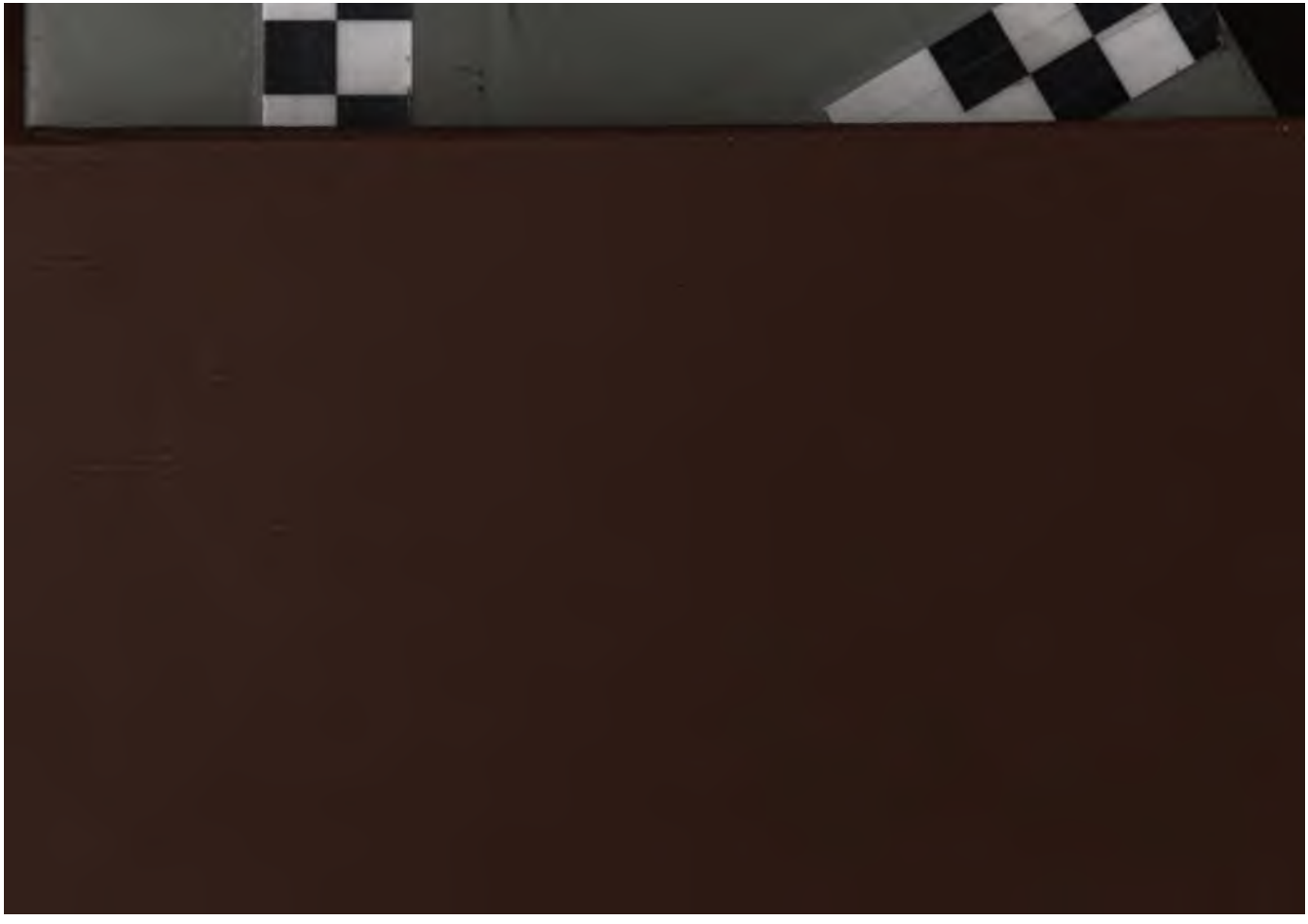
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